IMPORTANT NOTICE:

THIS VOLUME IS ONLY A FIRST DRAFT, WHOLY UNCORRECTED, OF THIS THIRD VOLUME OF BEYOND BEING, BEYOND MIND, BEYOND HISTORY, LACKING MANY OF THE CHAPTERS AND SECTIONS THAT WILL BE FEATURED IN THE DEFINITIVE VERSION. IT WILL CERTAINLY TAKE MORE THAN ONE YEAR TO PRODUCE THE DEFINITIVE VERSION, AND BEFORE BEGINNING ITS PREPARATION THE DEFINITIVE VERSIONS OF VOLUMES I AND II WILL HAVE TO BE PREPARED. HOWEVER, IN CASE THE READERS OF VOLUMES I AND II WANTED TO HAVE A TASTE OF WHAT VOLUME III WILL BE LIKE, THIS WAS INCLUDED AS WELL.

Elías Capriles

BEYOND BEING
BEYOND MIND
BEYOND HISTORY

A DZOGCHEN-FOUNDED
METATRANSPERSONAL, METAPOSTMODERN
PHILOSOPHY AND PSYCHOLOGY
FOR SURVIVAL AND AN AGE OF COMMUNION

VOLUME III:

BEYOND HISTORY:

A DEGENERATIVE PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY LEADING TO A GENUINE POSTMODERNITY

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Philosophy and Psychology for Survival in Communion

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This book is dedicated to:

The dharmakaya, true Teacher of humankind
and original, single source of spontaneous liberation;

HH Dudjom Rinpoche and Dungse Thinle Norbu Rinpoche,
who dispensed the teachings that allow spontaneous liberation
to occur regularly in the context of Dzogchen practice;

HH Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche, who bestowed so many
Empowerments and the strength of whose Contemplation
provided such an effective help for spontaneous liberation;

Chögyäl Namkhai Norbu, who most effectively herded
this practitioner since 1986, who provided the teachings
necessary for writing what had to be written,
and whom I hope will provide the teachings still needed;

And also:

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transmissions, lungs, teachings and/or assistance;

Khenchen Thrangu Rinpoche, who dispensed the first teaching
on Dzogchen and engaged in important dharma conversations.

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PART IV

BEYOND HISTORY:

A METAPOSTMODERN PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY AND REFLECTIONS ON THE SOCIAL SCIENCES

IX
Philosophy of History:

The Inversion of the “Forward Stampede” in Hegel, Wilber and the Theosophical Society, and the Blindness of the “Backward Reaction” in the Traditionalist Movement

[A] Mood of universal destruction and renewal... has set its mark on our age. This mood makes itself felt everywhere, politically, socially, and philosophically. We are living in what the Greeks called the "kairos"—the right moment—for a "metamorphosis of the gods," of the fundamental principles and symbols. This peculiarity of our time, which is certainly not of our conscious choosing, is the expression of the unconscious man within us who is changing. Coming generations will have to take account of this momentous transformation if humanity is not to destroy itself through the might of its own technology and science... So much is at stake and so much depends on the psychological constitution of modern man... Does the individual know that he is the makeweight that tips the scales?[a]

On the one hand I must attempt to change the souls of individuals so that their societies may be changed. On the other I must attempt to change the societies so that the individual soul will have a change.[b]

The Perennial Philosophy's Degenerative View of Human Evolution and History

Even though scientism forbids the production of myths and demands that the socio-economic and spiritual evolution of humankind be interpreted in scientific terms, all scientist interpretations of this evolution produced so far have been contradicted by countless data obtained by scientists of different disciplines. In fact, Hume showed that the sciences do not prove anything, and ever since many epistemologists have offered a great deal of "evidence" backing this position. Even the attempts to validate the sciences have done nothing but to invalidate them, for the most credible criterion adduced in pro of this position, which is that of A. J. Ayer (1981)—according to which "we are authorized to have faith in our procedure, so long as it carries out its function, which is that of predicting future experience and thus control our environment"—has invalidated the sciences insofar as, in trying to control our environment with the avowed aim of creating an Eden and kill death and pain, the sciences and the technology based on them have produced a hellish chaos, taking us to the brink of our extinction—which is supposed to be the opposite of the place where we intended to go. We are, thus, with Sorel (1903, 1906, 1908) in his assertion that the sciences are but myths, and the scientific pretension of Marxism was due to the force of the scientific myth prevailing in Marx's time. This implies that, insofar as we take the "discoveries" of the sciences as truths in the sense of *adæquatio* of the scientific map to the interpreted territory, they are ideologies—as Gramsci pointed out in 1948 (1997, p. 63),[1] as Bachelard corroborated (1957), and as so many others have reiterated.[2] Thus a vision of our socio-economic and spiritual evolution as the one presented here, which has a

[a] Jung (1970b, pp. 585-586; cited in Holland & MacDonald, 2006, pp. 75-76).
[b] King (1998, S. 19).

greater hold than the Marxist interpretation on so-called "scientific evidence," but which rather than pretending itself true in the sense of *adæquatio*, in agreement with Sorel acknowledges itself to be myth (of the kind Sorel called "authentic"),[3] is far more in agreement with Truth, not in the sense of *adæquatio,* but as will be defined below: as absence of the delusion that involves the confusion of the map with the territory and the belief in a perfect fit between them. And if "ideology" implies a masking of reality reflecting the interests of a society of class (in this case modern, bourgeois society represented by the scientists), this interpretation is not ideology in that it does not pretend to be what it is not.

In response to the above problem, so-called "postmodernism" demands that we steer away from totalizing metanarratives and produce only local, fragmentary *petit récits* (small narratives. Now, so long as we experience the contents of thought as absolutely true or false, the metanarratives prevailing in our civilization, society, cultural group or ideological ambit, subliminally determine[4] the assumptions on the basis of which we organize our experience and lives. This happens to those philosophers who declare themselves postmodern and forbid totalizing metanarratives yet take for granted theses such as... that there is no alternative to industrialization or capitalism, or that we have perfected ourselves in regard to primitive humans, of that technology in its present form is beneficial and we should not replace with another one that would be radically different from it (as in Marcuse's proposal), or that we are richer than prehistoric and ancient humans in general, or that contemporary European thought is more perfect than that of other times and latitudes—and in particular that it is impossible to free oneself from conditioning by thought, in a state of Communion free from the limits that thought introduces in our experience, as achieved by the Dionysian tradition in Greece and its equivalents in Asia.[5] (I am not using the term communion in the sense given it by Gilligan [1982], Tannen [1990], Wilber [1995, 1998], etc.; I capitalize it to make it clear that I am using it to refer to the dissolution of the illusory boundaries separating people, in the unconcealment of Dzogchen *qua* Base—which I believe was its original meaning.) The metanarratives that, not acknowledged to be such, subliminally condition those philosophers, have effects that are destructive and produce suffering, whereas the one presented here could provide keys for putting an end to the destructive, suffering-producing effects of the delusion consisting in the confusion of map and territory, as well as of modernity, industrialization and capitalism.

The problem does not lie in the elaboration of totalizing metanarratives, but in not realizing that one is conditioned by whichever narratives one clings to—which is particularly destructive in the case of the metanarratives justifying the destruction of the ecosphere, the subjugation and exploitation of other individuals, etc. This is why here I present a metanarrative alternative to those of modernity, industrialization and capitalism (which postmodernism has not managed to deconstruct as radically as it is imperative), in order to promote the total revolution that would make our survival possible and that would make human society a good place (*eutopos*) in which all of us could achieve plenitude and harmony. Now, since, as will be shown below, the ultimate source of the present problems is the delusion Shakyamuni called *avidya* or marigpa and which Heraclitus called *lethe*, an essential aspect of which is the confusion of map and territory and the belief in the perfect fit of the one and the other, in order for the metanarrative in question to achieve the function for which it was conceived, it must explicitly acknowledge its character as a metanarrative, and insist that it be used like Wittgenstein's ladder, which is used to accede

to the place where it can be left behind: that in which we have feed ourselves from the "bewitchment of our intelligence by means of language."

Such metanarrative is what Sorel called a "counterideology" (a nail that is used to remove another nail but that, so that it does not become an ideology, should not be left *in situ*), which presents the sociospiritual evolution of our species as a process of degeneration, recognizing—with Sorel—in the theory of progress an implicit of explicit philosophy of history justifying the prevailing system of power, and—also with Sorel—denouncing the latter to be characterized by an inversion that equates the increase of "positive knowledge" with moral progress, and the development of the sciences with social progress. (THIS IS TO BE RELATED TO THE STAGES OF EVOLUTION DISCUSSED BELOW: THE INITIAL LACK OF MYTH, THEN THE MYTH OF ETERNAL RETURN, AND THEN THE MYTH OF ETERNAL PROGRESS THAT NEGATES ITS CONDITION AS MYTH AND ASSERTS ITSELF TO BE "SCIENCE" UNDERSTOOD AS AN EXACT DESCRIPTION OF REALITY.)

In the book *Individuo, sociedad, ecosistema*[a] I expounded my interpretation of the degenerative view of human evolution and history, which I did not intend to review in detail in the present work. However, in that book I criticized only the most widely discussed Western philosophical interpretations of human evolution and history—Hegel's, on the one hand, and the Marxist, on the other—and did not even mention Ken Wilber's. Since in the preceding chapter I criticized in detail Wilber's "spectrum of consciousness" and in particular his explanation of ontogenesis in terms of fulcra, and since Wilber's conception of human evolution and history is expounded in terms of these fulcra, I believe at this point it is mandatory to review the philosophy of history I expounded in *Individuo*, *sociedad*, *ecosistema* (including my criticism of Hegel's view of evolution and history, and a few aspects of my criticism of the Marxist view on the same subject), and contrast it with Wilber's inverted views on evolution and history.

We have seen that the myth of *lila* (the hide-and-seek game of universal nondual awareness with itself, whereby it conceals itself as individual consciousness, and then upon Awakening rediscovers itself as cosmic nondual awareness—so to speak, since *from its own standpoint* it never loses itself) and the degenerative view of human spiritual and social evolution and history are common to a series of spiritual and philosophical traditions having Mount Kailash as their most sacred place—including the various Indian Shaiva traditions (and hence the Hindu Tantric traditions, which in general are Shaiva), Himalayan Bön, Persian Zurvanism, and Buddhist *Tantra* and Dzogchen. In the first chapters of this book, I also associated the myth of *lila* with the philosophy of Heraclitus and the related Dionysian tradition of ancient Greece. Now we will see that the degenerative view of human spiritual and social evolution and history is also shared by Chinese Taoism (which is also related to Mount Kailash); Hesiod, Heraclitus and the Stoics (among many others) in Greece;[6] and non-Shaiva traditions of India (a modified version of this view is held by the Ismailians, who also had a mystical center in Mount Kailash). In fact, the myth of the human individual's life as *lila* and the degenerative view of human spiritual and social evolution and history are concomitant insofar as the latter is a macro manifestation of the former—a fact that, as shown in Chapter III of Part I of this book, Heraclitus exemplified by representing the time cycle (*aion*) as a child playing chess (Fr. B 52 DK). Independently of whether we may prefer teleological or teleonomic interpretations of evolution, we may

[a] Capriles (1994a).

refer to this view of human evolution—on the model of Wilber's combination of Sanskrit and Greek words in his phrase "*atman telos* of evolution"—of the *lila telos* of evolution.

In India the cosmic time-cycle was called *kalpa* (Tib., kalpa[a]), but different traditions divided it in different ways. Some partitioned it into fourteen *manvantara*, which then they subdivided into four *yuga* or eras, whereas others divided the *kalpa* directly into these four *yuga* or eras, and still others divided it into three *yuga* or eras only. All traditions that posited four *yuga* or eras, regardless of whether of not they posit *manvantara*, referred to them as: (1) *krityayuga* (age of perfection) or *satyayuga* (era or Truth); (2) *tretayuga* (age of three); (3) *dwaparayuga* (age of two); and (4) *kaliyuga* (age of darkness or black era: the period of utmost degeneration).[7] Those traditions that divided the cycle or *kalpa* into three *yuga* or eras, referred to these as: (1) *satyayuga*; (2) *dharmayuga* (age of the Law), and (3) *kaliyuga*.

In Zhang Zhung (which included Tibet), the ancient Bönpo had a sophisticated degenerative conception of human evolution and history,[8] according to which in the original condition of total plenitude and perfection property and political power were nonexistent: these developed in the course of the gradual "Fall" corresponding to the degenerative evolution and history of our species. The view prevailing among Tibetan and Western historians is that after the arrival of Buddhism the Bön religion assimilated the Buddhist division into four or three *yuga* or eras, which it now teaches; however, some Bönpo sources take the credit and claim that it was the other way around: that the Indian systems assimilated their view of the successive *yuga* or eras from ancient Bön.

The Persians, Greeks and Romans shared the practice of naming the successive eras after metals, each less "noble" than the former: the golden age of perfection was succeeded by the less perfect silver age, which was followed by the more degenerate bronze age, which in its turn was followed by the iron age, in the last period of which degeneration reached its utmost expression. In Greece, after successive Aryan invasions effaced the degenerative view, Hesiod re-imported it from Persia; later on, in his book Heraclitus allegedly referred to the circular vision of becoming;[9] finally, the Stoics re-introduced the original schema of political, social and economic degenerative evolution that will be summarized below, beginning in a condition in which there were absolutely no social differences, no property, no exclusive family and no State or political power. (Also in Judaism there is talk of four ages called after metals: the *Book of Daniel*, probably inspired by Eastern traditions,[10] mentions the successive kingdoms of gold, silver, bronze, and a mixture of iron and clay, after which God will establish an everlasting kingdom. And, in Christianity, Clement of Alexandria and Origen [Origenes Adamantius], and later on Desiderius Erasmus, accepted a circular vision of becoming bearing the influence of Heraclitus and the Stoics; likewise, more diluted versions of this view are found in Albertus Magnus, Thomas Aquinas, Dante, and several others.)

In ancient China, the two most characteristic systems of thought were Taoism and Confucianism. The former, whose practice aimed at the radical transformation of the individual's inner experience, naturally linked up with the pre-existing worldview of yin and yang, associating itself closely to the lower strata of society, and to the communitarian structure and function of hamlets. In its turn, the latter—whose practice was limited to the regulation of behavior, both at the individual and the political level—developed on the basis of the pre-existing worldview of Heaven and Earth, associated with the Empire and

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[a] *bdkal pa* or *kal pa*.

the mandarinate. Among these systems, it was the former that upheld the degenerative view of human evolution and history, in a version that will also be briefly reviewed below; however, there is no evidence whatsoever that Taoists ever posited either eras (*yuga*) or *manvantara*.

According to my interpretation of the traditional degenerative conception of human evolution and history, degeneration results from the gradual development during the time cycle, of the basic human delusion that the Buddha Shakyamuni called *avidya* and that Heraclitus referred to as *lethe*. In the initial Era of Perfection, Age of Truth or Golden Age, a state of Communion characterized by total plenitude and perfection and Total Space-Time-Awareness (analogous or similar to the one called Dzogchen-*qua*-Path that here I have been referring to by the term Self-*qua*-Path), in which the true, single nature of all animate and inanimate entities was realized nonconceptually and nondually, alternated with the incipient manifestation of the delusion the Buddha called *avidya* and Heraclitus called *lethe*. However, this delusion being extremely mild, it failed to give rise to the unhappy consciousness that constitutes the first noble truth of Buddhism and to the *Angst* that according to existentialism and *Existenzphilosophie* constitutes the bare experience of the being of the human individual. With the passing of time, it became gradually more difficult to enter the state of Communion, so that only few practitioners of ancient Wisdom traditions could gain access to it, and in the alternative state delusion became progressively more powerful, giving rise to ever-increasing *Angst*, an ever unhappier consciousness, and in general ever more negative, unwanted consequences. In our cycle, at the present point in the process of degenerative evolution, which marks the final stage of the of the Age of Darkness, Black Era or Iron Age, and hence of the cycle, delusion and its negative, undesirable consequences have reached their utmost expression: the prevailing human project aiming at producing a comfortable, painless world by technological means has given rise to an ecological crisis at the level of ecosphere, society and individual, which proves that it was based on a delusory perception, and which constitutes the *reductio ad absurdum* of this delusory perception.[11] Thus humankind has reached the threshold level at which it can surpass the delusion that developed during the cycle, and if this surpassing is achieved in time to prevent self-destruction (and personally I am convinced final destruction will not occur at the end of this cycle), a new cycle may began, starting with a new Age of Perfection, Age of Truth or Golden Age—or else the roughly analogous Millennium of plenitude and perfection announced in the *Tantra Kalachakra* of *Vajrayana* Buddhism and in analogous traditions of Christianity, the Ismailian tradition of Islam[a] and so on, may be instated.[12]

Delusion began developing already in the Age of Truth, Era of Perfection or Golden Age, impelling the process of degeneration and thus preparing the ground for the advent of the following eras (so to speak, for the periods in question result from the division by human beings, according to a given criterion, of the time continuum, rather than from clear-cut discontinuities in the evolutionary process). Despite my diametrical opposition to the extreme right-wing Traditionalist movement, which will be discussed below, I find this fact to be aptly expressed in Biblical and Koranic imagery by the following excerpt from a work by Abu Bakr Siraj Ed-din (René Guénon’s successor as a Sufi teacher, Martin Lings):[b]

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[a] Under the direction of Brice Parain (1972), p. 281.
[b] Siraj Ed-din (1974), p. 29.

In all parts of the world tradition tells us of an age when man lived in a Paradise on earth. But although it is said that there were then no signs of corruption upon the face of earth, it may be supposed, in view of the Fall which followed, that during this age the perfect human nature had become the basis for gradually less and less spiritual exaltation. This is to be inferred from the story of Adam and Eve, whose creations are said to mark different phases passed through by mankind in general during this age. The creation of Adam and his adoration by the Angels is taken to refer to a period when man was born with Knowledge of the Truth of Certainty. The creation of Eve thus refers to a later period when man began to be born in possession of the Eye of Certainty only, that is, in the state of merely human perfection: in the beginning Eve was contained in Adam as the human nature is contained in the Divine, and her separate existence indicates the apparently separate existence of the perfect human nature as an entity in itself.[13] Finally the loss of this perfection corresponds to the loss of the Garden of Eden, which marks the end of the Primordial Age.

The beginning of Eve's separate existence also marks the rupture of the state of psychological hermaphroditism that in Persia was represented by Zurvan and in India was represented by the form of Shiva called Ardhanarishwara, in which human beings of both sexes needed not negate in themselves the essence associated with the sex that did not correspond to that of their bodily shape, and in which—insofar as in Jungian terms this meant that males had no *anima* and females had no *animus*—there could be no conflicts among the sexes.

Despite the fact that, as note above, Taoism does not posit *yuga* or eras, some Chinese texts list successive periods in the degenerative evolution of our species, which they link to the lives of renowned characters (real of fabled) in Chinese prehistory and history. In the *Wen-tzu,* attributed to Lao-tzu, we read:[a]

Lao-tzu said:

In remote antiquity, authentic people breathed yin and yang, and all living beings admired their virtue, thus harmonizing in a peaceful way. In those times, leadership was hidden, spontaneously giving rise to a pure simplicity. Simplicity had not been lost as yet, and so the multitude of beings was very composed.

Later on, society deteriorated. Toward the time of Fu-hsi, a flourishing of deliberate effort occurred; everyone was about to abandon their innocent mind and consciously comprehend the universe. Their virtues were complex and were not unified.

When the epoch in which Shen-nung and Huang-ti governed the country and elaborated calendars for harmonizing yin and yang, everybody kept upright and willingly stood the charge of looking and hearing. Therefore, they were in order but not in harmony.

Subsequently, in the society of the times of the Shang-yin dynasty, the people carne to savor and covet things, and intelligence was beguiled by external things. Essential life lost its reality.

Upon the arrival of the Chou dynasty, we have diluted purity and lost simplicity, straying from the Way (*tao*) to conceive artificialities, acting on the basis of dangerous qualities. There have arisen the sprouts of craftiness and ruse; cynical erudition is used in pretending to arrive at wisdom, false cynicism is used to intimidate the masses, the elaboration of poetry and prose is used to attain fame and honor. Everyone wants to employ knowledge and astuteness to be socially recognized, and loses the foundation of the global

[a] Lao-tzu (1994), chap. 172, pp. 245-7. I am retranslating into English from the Spanish translation.

> source; therefore, in society there are those who lose their natural lives. This deterioration has been a gradual process, which has been occurring over a long time.
>
> Thus, the learning of complete people consists in making their essential nature return to nonbeing,[14] and allow their minds to float in ampleness. [Conversely], mundane learning does away with intrinsic virtues and reduces the essential nature; while internally they preoccupy themselves for their health, [mundane people] resort to violent actions to confuse with regard to name and honor. This is something complete people do not do.
>
> What eradicated intrinsic virtue was self-consciousness; what reduced essential nature was the cutting of its living creativity. If people are complete, they have certitude about the meaning of death and life and understand the patterns of glory and ignominy. Even if the whole world praises them, that does not give them added breath, and even if the whole world repudiates them, that does not inhibit them. They have attained the key to the essential Way (*tao*).

It takes an extremely long time for the delusion that Shakyamuni called *avidya* and that Heraclitus called *lethe* to develop to a degree like the one it has attained today, when it has given rise to the most extreme instances of the "reverse law" or "law of inverted effect" illustrated in vol. II of this book with quotations from Vimalamitra and Sarahapada,[15] which are characteristic of the moment when delusion is about to reach its logical extreme and thus complete its *reductio ad absurdum*—or even to the degree it had attained at the time when Shakyamuni taught the four noble truths. In our time, the fact that our perception of reality is distorted has been demonstrated by the fact that our attempts to reach the cardinal point of a technological Eden have led us to the opposite cardinal point of a hellish existence and to the very verge of the abyss consisting in the self-destruction of human society—and possibly of our biological species, or perhaps even of all life on our planet. And—for the reasons summed up above, which will be further explained and substantiated below—this has opened the hitherto nonexistent possibility that the delusion that the Buddha called *avidya* and that Heraclitus called *lethe* may be surpassed on the level of the species rather than on that of a few special individuals.

In fact, the most upright and regardful scientists on the planet have warned that, if current trends of human action on the biosphere are maintained, ecological crisis will very likely put an end to life on our planet, or at least disrupt human society—not unlikely in the current century.[16] Our way of life would sacrifice future generations in their entirety and many members of present generations in exchange for an apparent comfort that is only available to a privileged minority, but that does not provide true happiness even to this minority. Like all other members of technological civilization, those who live in opulence are always beset by dissatisfaction, anxiety and neurosis, and have no access to the nonconceptual unveiling of the nondual Flow of our true nature that alone makes life truly Meaningful.[17] Furthermore, those who are near the outermost bounds of the higher point of the wheel of *samsara*, as Blaise Pascal noted,[a] are made to fall far more precipitously by the wheel's turnings.[18]

The project of Modernity is a product of the exacerbation of the delusion called *avidya* or marigpa, which has produced an extreme perceptual fragmentation resulting in a lack of overall understanding of the universe, which is an indivisible continuum and a network of interdependences. Let me quote from vol. II of this book, for what was written

[a] Pascal (1962).

there with regard to an essential characteristic of the basic human delusion called *avidya* or marigpa is essential for understanding the problem we are concerned with here:[19]

> ... the exacerbation of the delusion called *avidya* or marigpa, and hence of What *Gestalt* theory calls figure-ground mind and of understanding exclusively in terms of digital secondary process, has caused the figures we single out in the sensory continuum to appear to us as in themselves isolated from the ground, making consciousness unaware of the indivisibility of the analog continuum of the territory and of the interdependence, not only of the singled out figure and the rest of the continuum, but of all *potential* figures among themselves. The result is a lack of overall understanding of the indivisible, analog continuum and network of interdependences that is the universe—which, according to the *Udana* (third book of the *Khuddaka Nikaya* in the Pali Canon, which contains the teachings of the First Promulgation that form the basis of the Hinayana), the Prajñaparamitasutras (Second Promulgation), the philosophy of Nagarjuna (based on the latter sources) and other Buddhist sources and systems, is a central aspect of the basic human delusion called *avidya* or marigpa. K. Venkata Ramanan paraphrases the explanation the *Prajñaparamitashastra*, which the Chinese attribute to Nagarjuna,[20] gives about this essential aspect of delusion:[a]
>
> "We select from out of the presented only the aspects of our interest and neglect the rest; to the rest that is neglected we become first indifferent and then blind; in our blindness, we claim completeness for the aspects we have selected. We seize them as absolute, we cling to them as complete truth... While the intellectual analysis of the presented content into its different aspects is conducive to and necessary for a comprehensive understanding, analysis is miscarried if the fragmentary is mistaken for the complete, the relative is mistaken for the absolute."
>
> In the *Udana* of the First Promulgation,[b] Shakyamuni Buddha illustrated this aspect of the basic human delusion by the story of the six blind men and the elephant, according to which the one who held the elephant's head asserted the object to be like a pot, the one who held the ear said it was like a winnowing fan, and so on:[c] each of them held so firmly to his partial view, taking it to be the exact, absolute view of totality, that they quarreled bitterly, unable to come to an agreement as to the nature of the object before them. The same story is told in the *Tathagatagarbhasutra* of the Third Promulgation, as follows:[d]
>
> "The king assembled many blind men and, [placing them before] an elephant, commanded, "Describe [this object's] particular characteristics." Those among them who felt the elephant's nose said that [the object] resembled an iron hook. Those who felt the eyes said that [it] resembled bowls. Those who felt the ears said [it] resembled winnowing baskets. Those who felt the back said it resembled a sedan chair, and those who felt the tail said it resembled a string. Indeed, though [their respective descriptions responded to the parts of the] elephant [they touched], they were lacking in overall understanding..."

In a modified version of this story that was popularized by Sufi poets in Islamic countries, each of the men grasped a different part of the pachyderm, reaching a diverse

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[a] Venkata Ramanan (1966), pp. 107-108.
[b] *Udana* 6,4: *Tittha Sutta*.
[c] **P.T.S., pp. 66-68; Venkata Ramanan (1966), pp. 49-50, reference in note 138 to ch. I, p. 344.**
[d] Dudjom Rinpoche (1991), vol. I, p. 295. The quotation is from *Sutra of the Nucleus of the Tathagata*. Tib. *de bzhin gshegs pa'i snying po'i mdo*. Skt., *Tathagatagarbhasutra*. Tohoku University catalogue of the sDe-dge edition of the Tibetan Buddhist Canon (Ed. H. Ui et al., Sendai, 1934), 258. P. Pfandt, Mahayana Texts Translated into Western Languages (Köln: In Kommission bei E. J. Brill, 1983), 231. The parts in parentheses are those I modified in order to make the text more comprehensible in the content in which it is being used.

conclusion as to what the animal was: the one who took hold of its trunk said it was a hose; the one who seized its ear thought it was a fan; the one who put his hand on its back decided it was a throne; the one who clasped its leg concluded it was a pillar and, finally, the one who grabbed its tail threw it away in terror, believing it to be a snake.[21]

The modern exacerbation of the essential human delusion, by carrying to its logical extreme our sensation of being entities inherently separate and independent from the rest of nature, and in general our fragmentary perception of the universe as though it were the sum of intrinsically separate, self-existent and unconnected entities, has made us worse than the men with the elephant. It has led us to develop and implement the technological project aimed at destroying the parts of the world that annoy us and appropriating those that please us, which has seriously impaired the functionality of the worldwide ecosystem of which we are parts and on which our survival as a species depends. A popular Western author illustrated this by saying that our incapacity to grasp the unity of the coin of life led us to develop and apply powerful corrosives in order to destroy the side that we deemed undesirable—death, illness, pain, troubles, etc.—and to protect the side we considered desirable—life, health, pleasure, comfort, etc. Those corrosives, by boring a hole through the coin, now are on the verge of destroying the side we were intent on preserving.[22]

In order to illustrate the narrow and fragmentary state of consciousness inherent in *avidya*-marigpa that a tradition associated with the *Kalachakra Tantra* calls "small space-time-knowledge,"[a23] the Buddha Shakyamuni resorted to the example of a frog that, having been confined throughout its life to the bottom of a well, thought the sky was a small blue circle.[b] This is the type of consciousness illustrated by the famous adage of the tree that does not allow the individual to see the forest, concerning which Gregory Bateson said that, when it perceives an arc, it fails to realize that it is part of a circuit. Consequently, when an arc annoys us, we aim at it our powerful technological weapons, destroying the circuit of which they are a part; setting fire to the tree in front of us, we burn the forest in which we stand, bringing about our own destruction. In other of my works,[c] I explained this in terms of the structure of the Four Noble Truths:

> (1) The current ecological crisis is so grave that, if everything goes on as it is, human society will be disrupted and life may even come to disappear from the planet, possibly within the current century. Meanwhile, natural disasters will proliferate, our existence will become ever more miserable, and an increasing number of human beings will be incapable of adapting to the social and biological environment, which will give rise to extremely high levels of stress, neurosis and psychosis, addiction to the most harmful drugs, serious illnesses and suicides.
>
> (2) There is a primary cause of the ecological crisis, which is the fragmentation of human perception and extreme selfishness inherent in fully developed *avidya*. If we feel and believe ourselves to be inherently separate from the rest of the human species, sooner or after we will give rise to the religious, social, economic, racial and ideological divisions, within societies as well as between different human groups, which are at the root of injustices and conflicts. If we are unaware of ecological interdependence and feel inherently separate from the rest of the ecosystem, we are likely to wish to destroy the aspects of nature that disturb us and to appropriate those we wrongly believe will endow us

[a] Cf. Tarthang Tulku (1977a).
[b] Tibetan lama Dungse Thinle Norbu Rinpoche often uses this example.
[c] Capriles (1994, 2000e, 2003).

with comfort, pleasure and security—giving rise to the technological project that has destroyed the systems on which life depends.

(3) There is a solution to the ecological crisis, which lies in the eradication of its primary cause—the basic human delusion called *avidya* or marigpa—and of its secondary causes—the technological project of domination and exploitation of nature and of other human beings, and the severe political, economic and social inequality.

(4) The Buddhist Path can eradicate the causes of ecological crisis and restore an era of communitarian, harmonious social organization based on the systemic wisdom that frees us from the urge to obtain ever more manipulative knowledge, and allows us to use the knowledge we already possess in ways that are beneficial to the biosphere as a whole, and to all beings without distinctions.

All of this shows that fully developed *avidya*, as a delusion, is not unlike the ones psychiatrists describe as a result of the observation of their psychotic patients—the main difference between the one and the others being that unanimous consensus causes normal, socially sanctioned delusion to go unnoticed. As shown in the second volume of this book, *Madhyamika-Prasangika* Master Chandrakirti told the fable of a king that consulted a famous astrologer, who predicted a rainfall of "maddening water" would contaminate the reservoirs in his kingdom, so that all who drank from them would be driven insane. The king warned his ministers and subjects to prepare a protected supply of water and avoid drinking the deranging water. However, the subjects, being less wealthy, exhausted their reserves more rapidly, and at some point had to drink contaminated water. Since the king and the ministers did not behave like the subjects who had drunk the maddening water, the latter concluded that the former had become insane. When the ministers used up their reserves, they also had to drink the deranging water—upon which the rest of the subjects thought the ministers had become normal, and all agreed the only one still insane was the king. Thus in order to keep his kingdom and avoid being impeached and put into an asylum, the king had no option but to drink the polluted water.[a][24] As also seen in the volume in question, in the West Pascal compared the state of mind of normal individuals to a psychological disorder,[b] and Erich Fromm reproduced Chandrakirti's idea almost exactly when he suggested that our society as a whole is lacking sanity, by noting that,[c] "Just as there is a *folie à deux* there is a *folie à millions*. So long as space-time-awareness is not total, perception is fragmentary, and so long as thought is delusorily valued the singled-out fragments of the whole, being recognized in terms of delusorily-valued thoughts, are taken to be substantial, isolated essents; therefore, there is delusion, which is the only valid criterion for diagnosing insanity, and which implies the consequences that derive from a distorted or inverted perception of reality: a greater or lesser degree of selfishness, of men-with-the-elephant effect, of frog-in-the-well effect, of self-impeded centipede effect,[25] and so on.

The progressive development of delusion impelled the process of degeneration that followed its course one era after another until, in the Iron Age, Era of Darkness or Dark Age (*kaliyuga*), it conceived the project of domination of nature and other human beings,

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[a] Trungpa (1976); Shah (1970); Chöphel (2005). The original Buddhist version of the story was told in Chandrakirti, *Bodhisattvayogacharyachatuhshatakatika* (Tib., *dbu ma bzhi brgya pa'i 'grel pa, or Byang chub sems dpa'i rnal 'byor spyod pa gzhi brgya pa'i rgya cher 'grel pa*): a Commentary to Aryadeva's *Chatuhishataka* (Tib., *bzhi brgya pa*).

[b] Pascal (1962).

[c] Fromm (1955), pp. 14-15.

and set out to implement this project through the development of technology—which, toward the end of the Age in question, caused delusion to complete its *reductio ad absurdum*. The Pythagoreans had already conceived the technological project, which is the one Goethe described in his famous ballad, *The Sorcerer's Apprentice* (a theme that later on was used by authors as diverse as Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels,[a] Alan Watts,[b] José Lutzenberger,[c] and Arturo Eichler,[d] and which was put into music in the famous scherzo by Paul Dukas, into a cartoon by Walt Disney,[e] and into a ballet by Helga Swedlund and Walter Braunfelds): the apprentice used one of his master's spells to fulfill his duties effortlessly, but the charm went far beyond his control, and disaster ensued. Scientific knowledge allows us to develop the magic of technology, which, like the charms of the sorcerer's apprentice, makes it possible for us to realize surprising feats—such as flying, performing colossal tasks without exerting physical effort, and even reaching the moon. And, just as in the fable of the sorcerer's apprentice, at some time we lose control of the charm and wreak havoc on ourselves—in our case, coming to the verge of extinction. Alan Watts wrote:[f]

> When we fight the environment and disown it, our methods and weapons become part of it, part of the involuntary and uncontrollable aspect of *karma*. This, like in the tale of the sorcerer's apprentice, is the fate of all power games, not only in the areas of material power, but also in those of psychic and spiritual power. This is why one should not let oneself be beguiled by the many forms of psychic and mental discipline that promise ever greater control over thought and emotion, and even magical powers. All of those methods—unless they are designed specifically to be self-frustrating and thus to reduce to absurdity the ambition for power—are simply ego-trips of a highbrow and refined order, but often they produce such sensational short-term results that people are easily deceived by the pseudo-gurus who teach them.

Among others, Aldous Huxley in *The Perennial Philosophy* and John Blofeld in the Introduction to his version of the *I Ching*, put forth statements similar to the above. However, rather than being a recent by-product of technological development, acute awareness of the dynamics expressed in the fable of the sorcerer's apprentice seems to have been widespread in high antiquity, and genuine Wisdom traditions always warned against this dynamics in their respective fables. Indian mythology featured the character of Matariswan, who in Greek mythology became Prometheus:[26] the demigod who, having molded a clay statuette, stole the fire from the gods in order to animate it, giving rise to technology—which we have brought much farther than the ancient Greeks ever dreamed. Ivan Illich wrote:[g]

> The world of the primitive is governed by fate, facts and necessity. By stealing fire from the gods, Prometheus turned facts into problems, called necessity into question and defied fate. Classical man... was aware that he could defy fate-nature-environment, but only

[a] Marx & Engels (1970).
[b] Watts (1973).
[c] Lutzenberger (1978).
[d] Eichler (1987).
[e] The famous movie, *Fantasy*, featuring Mickey Mouse as the sorcerer's apprentice.
[f] Watts (1973). Retranslated into English from the Spanish translation.
[g] Illich (1971).

at his own risk. Contemporary man goes farther; he attempts to create the world in his image, to build a totally man-made environment, and then discovers that he can do so only on the condition of constantly remaking himself to fit it. We now must face the fact that man himself is at stake.

Prometheus, "the one who looks toward the future" or "who makes the polestar advance", unleashed Zeus' wrath by his theft. As a result, the latter sent Pandora and her box into the world, to let out the evils; he conjured up a deluge that destroyed humankind;[27] and he chained Prometheus to a rock in the Caucasus, where vultures would tear at his liver—which would grow again as soon as the last bit were devoured. Having played at being Prometheus, we human beings are enduring a torture that, unlike Prometheus', has not ceased at the term of thirty years, for no Heracles has the power to unchain us, and unless we become Noah-like Deucalions, going aboard the Ark and recovering the horn of plenty, our torment will go on until we destroy our own species and possibly all life on this planet. For Deucalion to save the waters in the Ark and from Pyrrha beget a new humankind, Prometheus' brother, Epimetheus, "the one who looks back", must marry the Earth—source both of hope and of the evils—and from her beget Pyrrha. In the Judeo-Christian tradition it is said that "the devil is not evil; he only pursues the wrong star." The star he pursues is the polestar, which is the star of the North, the star of Prometheus: this is why E. F. Schumacher declared, "Any activity which fails to recognize a self-limiting principle is the devil".[a][28]

The project of modernity stems from the rebellion of the technological Sisyphus against the spontaneity of becoming, which ancient Greeks misunderstood as "fate". Our punishment is the mental state of the modern city-dweller, which, as Illich noted, may be compared to the torment of Sisyphus, who was chained to an enormous rock he had to roll up the hill to the pinnacle of hell, but which always slipped when he tried to place it at the top, dragging him down—so that immediately he had to begin rolling it up again. One of the versions of the myth presents Sisyphus—the rebellious descendent of Deucalion—as a paradigm for the *homo technicus* who has tried to destroy the "negative" side of the coin of life, attempting to kill death: he managed to temporarily chain Thanatos, so that for a while no one died on earth. However, since it is impossible to prevent death forever, Thanatos was liberated and Sisyphus was condemned to suffer his proverbial torment, corresponding to the mental state of those who have come to live totally outside the Now, hungrily anticipating a future that—since we are cut from the Now and our attention is directed to the future—can never become a Now.

Tantalus' crime was similar to Sisyphus'. Having been invited to the dinner of the gods, he stole the recipe for the Ambrosia, the panacea bestowing immortality. As a punishment, he was immersed in a lake to the neck, under trees with branches loaded with fruit, under a charm that prevented him from eating or drinking, for it caused the waters to recede when he lowered his mouth toward them, and the trees' branches to be blown away by the wind whenever he attempted to reach their fruits: his punishment was the exacerbation of the sensation of lack inherent in delusion, similar to the one that the mass media and other elements of modern life have induced in us.

The project of modernity is aptly represented by the biblical story of the tower of Babel, as an attempt to arrive at paradise through building, by means of linear intelligence,

[a] Schumacher (1973).

fragmentary vision and delusion, a material structure on earth—which produces an enormous confusion ending up in a disaster. In the mystical tradition of the Hasidim, the project we are concerned with is represented by the fable of the Golem. It is well-known that, according to the Kabbalah, the word is the source of creation (the "four letters" of God's name cannot be pronounced, for the creative principle must not be put in the place of the created and taken for a product of delusorily valued thought); one day, a Hasid decided to create a servant who would perform his domestic tasks, and to this end he molded a doll with clay, wrote on its forehead the first, the thirteenth and the last Hebrew letters (*aleph*, *mem* and *thau*), which spelled word *emeth*, meaning "truth," and circumambulated the holy temple anticlockwise. The homunculus came to life and began to carry out its masters' household duties, while constantly increasing in size. When the android reached an inconvenient size, the master was meant to erase the first of the letters on its forehead, leaving the other two, which formed the word *meth*, meaning "death"—upon which the Golem would instantly dissolve and become mud again. Once, when the homunculus was becoming too big for its master's household, the latter fell asleep, and so the Golem grew so much that, when the master woke up, it was about to cause the house to break apart. Unable to reach the forehead of such an enormous humanoid, the master had to pile up tables and chairs until, finally, he managed to erase the *aleph*—whereupon the Golem instantly dissolve, letting so much mud fall on the Hasid as to bury him and cause his death.[29] In the fiction of our time, it is Dr. Frankenstein who appoints himself as demiurge and gives life to a Golem, with results analogous to those obtained by the Hasid of the Hebrew tale.[30]

The Sufis have similar a similar story, in which a group of ignorant, power-seeking men who went to see Jesus in order to obtain the word that revived the dead. Initially, Jesus refused to give it to them, but having realized that the men would only learn from experience, he gave them the word. When they were walking through the desert on their way home, they found a heap of bones and, suspecting that Jesus could have deceived them, they decided to try the word' s power. As soon as they pronounced it, the bones flew up and joined into an animal skeleton, were covered with flesh, and became the live wild beast to which they had belonged—which immediately devoured the would-be sorcerers.

The above stories illustrate the fact that the technological project has reduced delusion to absurdity by making patent the boomerang effect of the projects and actions conceived and carried out under delusion. Einstein noted:[a]

> The unleashed power of the atom has changed everything save our modes of thinking, and we thus drift toward unparalleled catastrophes.

However, what has "changed everything" is modern technology in general, and what must be changed in order to avert the destruction of humankind by the magic of technology is not only our ways of thinking, but also—and especially—our experience and perception. If catalyzed by genuine Wisdom traditions, rather than destroying our species and the whole of the ecosystem, the "boomerang effect" of technological action will destroy human delusion, for it is the latter that our scientific-technological project has led to its *reductio ad absurdum*.[31] This was apparently foreseen by Kant, who in the famed

[a] In Gilliam (1986).

essay *Perpetual Peace*[a] asserted that the word is destined for perpetual peace, which would come about either through human foresight, or through a series of catastrophes that leave no other choice. This is also the meaning of the statement by E. F. Schumacher:[b]

> We can say today that man is far too clever to be able to survive without wisdom. No one is really working for peace unless he is working primarily for the restoration of wisdom.

The basis of the scientific-technological project is the illusion of omnipotence of human reason and the distrust of Nature's holistic, non-conceptual Wisdom: we feel that, for our earthly existence to be comfortable and pleasant, we must control and dominate Nature; that the latter is imperfect and that, therefore, we must impose on it the "perfect order" that we have imagined. To this aim we developed the project of technological domination of the natural word that in the long run caused the basic delusion that developed during the entire evolutionary cycle to prove unviable and thus achieve its experiential *reductio ad absurdum*. Therefore, now we have the opportunity to overcome delusion as a species and recover the systemic wisdom and basic virtue it impeded,[32] and only if we succeed in this will we have real possibilities of avoiding extinction as a species and, if this wisdom and its virtue are recovered on a sufficiently large scale, of entering either a new Golden Age / Era of Truth / Age of Perfection, or the Millennium of harmony, spirituality and fulfillment predicted in the *Kalachakra Tantra*, as well as in the John's Apocalypse, in the Book of Ismailians,[c] and so on.

At this point, it seems pertinent to go beyond mythology and discuss this process in strictly philosophical terms. Hence the following section summarizes the critique of Hegel's philosophy of history, with reference to the relationship between the functioning of the two brain hemispheres and the two corresponding processes (those that Freud described in the Project of 1895), which I developed in other two works.[d]

Hegel's Modernist Inversion of the Perennial Philosophy of History

Since Hegel believed everything was thought, for him change and movement, which were at the root of becoming, evolution and history, occurred in the realm of thought. This implied that each and every new moment in the evolution of our species necessarily had to negate the content of the previous moment of thought. Thus in a series of moments *a* - *b* - *c*, moment *c* would involve the negation of the content of moment *b*, which in its turn would involve the negation of the content of moment *a*; therefore, moment *c* would involve the negation of the negation of the content of moment *a*. Since in formal logic the negation of a negation restores the condition negated by the negation that in its turn is negated, if all changes in the physical world were changes in thought, unless a negation different from that of formal logic were at work, the negation of the negation of the content of moment *a* would restore the content of moment *a*—and hence evolution and history would be impossible. Thus if change and movement occurred in the realm of

[a] Kant (1957).
[b] Schumacher (1973).
[c] Under the direction of Brice Parain (1972), p. 281.
[d] Capriles (1992, 1994a); referred to in Capriles (2000b); also to be featured in Capriles (work in progress 1, work in progress 2).

thought, for there to be becoming, evolution and history, the negation of previous moments that would make change possible, would have to be of a special kind, totally different from that of formal logic, which would make it possible for the negation of the content of a past moment of thought not to return us to the state previous to that moment. Furthermore, since Hegel believed that the chronological evolution of the human spirit and of human institutions represented a constant increase in *truth and totality*, the special negation he required would have to be of such nature that the incorporation of the negated into a new thesis would produce *an increase in completion and perfection*, as well as *in truth and authenticity*. Thus he transposed a type of negation that, in case it occurs at all, does so only in the realm of thought and in specific areas of intellectual activity (for example, in the succession of some specific scientific theories), to occur both in the dynamic that he described in the *Science of Logic* and in the one he described in the *Phenomenology of Mind*: what he called *Aufhebung* or sublation, which he exlained as a dialectical negation that conserved what it negated, incorporating it into a new position (thesis), and which by so doing was supposed give rise to an increase in completion and perfection, authenticity and truth. With regard to this negation, Hegel wrote:[a]

> Surpassing (*das Aufheben*) expresses its true twofold significance, which we have already seen in the negative: it is at the same time a negating (*Negieren*) and a conserving (*Aufbewahren*).

When the "dialectical negation" called *Aufhebung* or sublation in turn was negated, what the first negation had negated was not restored, for the second negation did not thereby disappear; contrariwise, both what the first negation had obliterated and the product of this first negation would be incorporated in the product of the second negation: a unification (synthesis) that instantly becomes a new position (thesis), and which constitutes greater truth, authenticity and totality than the two former stages: the one that had been the object of the first negation and the one that had resulted from this first negation and that had been the object of the second negation.

The negation characteristic of formal logic is the same to formal logicians, to Hegel and to the author of this book; however, even concerning this negation I have a fundamental disagreement with Hegel. Since the German philosopher held, not only that the conceptual map corresponded exactly to the territory it interpreted, but that *the map was itself the territory*, he believed we should take the map to be absolutely true but to be necessarily self-contradictory insofar as reality itself was contradictory. The higher Buddhist teachings, and in particular the Dzogchen teachings, on the contrary, stress the fact that the map is not the territory, and that it is the delusory valuation of the map that gives rise to the mistaken belief in the ultimately contradictory character of the two extremes of any of the dualities produced by formal logical negation. This belief is destroyed by the manifestation of the Self-*qua*-Path, which involves the dissolution of the delusory valuation of thought and which, *qua* boundless panoramic condition, embraces the indivisible continuum from deluded mind artificially abstracts the opposites produced by the negation of formal logic. Thus when the delusory valuation of thought is reestablished, the practitioner is aware that neither extreme of a duality—for example, *a* and *not-a*—can correspond precisely to that which it interprets, and that both extremes imply each other,

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[a] Hegel (1976), Book I, pp. 97-98. I translated the quotation from Spanish into English.

depend on each other to be what they are, and are artificially abstracted within an indivisible whole. Therefore, in the Self-*qua*-Path what delusion takes to be opposites coincide, for it involves the nonconceptual realization of the continuum from, when delusion is functioning, the opposites are abstracted. However, Hegel disparaged this possibility, which alone can resolve the "problem of life," for in the discussion of the views of his fellow German idealists he implied that any kind of surpassing of differentiation would result in a night in which "all cats are grey"[33]—or, in German, "all cows are black:"[a]

> To pit this single assertion, that "in the Absolute all is one," against the organized whole of determinate and complete knowledge, or of knowledge which at least aims at and demands complete development — to give out its Absolute as the night in which, as we say, all cows are black — that is the very naiveté of emptiness of knowledge.

And, in fact, both in the *Phenomenology of Mind* and in the *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*, Hegel dismissed Eastern Wisdom traditions for reasons quite similar to these, and placed Eastern thought in one of the lowest stages of development of Mind, previous to the one attained by the Ancient Greeks.

Let us go back to the consideration of the Hegelian "dialectical negation" called *Aufhebung* or sublation. We say that in our sensations all is movement and change. However, the idea of movement and change only may arise once *thought* compares what sensitiveness shows in two successive moments, implicitly negating the condition shown in the first moment, as it has been replaced by the condition shown in the second moment. This negation does not take place in that which is interpreted, which is not conceptual and cannot contemplate the possibility of negation, but in the interpretation that—contrarily to Hegel's beliefs and in this respect to some extent in agreement with the views of cardinal Nicholas of Cusa—can never correspond exactly to that which it interprets.[34]

In these terms, it is legitimate to understand the determination (*Bestimmung*) carried out by thought in terms of Spinoza's principle *Omnis determinatio negatio est* ("determination is always a negation") and to affirm, as Hegel did,[b] that determination is always a negation of the indeterminate. However, it would be necessary to make it clear that determination, understood in this sense, is a process that takes place in thought, and that *thought neither is the same as what it interprets, nor corresponds to it exactly*; therefore, thought is not responsible for the constant movement that takes place in sensitiveness and that common sense interprets as changes in the physical world, but only for our perception and understanding of those changes. (The only way to explain this unequivocally in a way that all may understand is in terms of an example: imagine I am facing the road with open eyes as a car passes; if the corresponding sensa occur but I do not recognize them in terms of concepts, there will be no perception and therefore no consciousness that there were changes, or, far less, that "a car passed." In fact, this is precisely what occurs if the one facing the road is engrossed in an absorption of the neutral condition of the base-of-all: if after the individual come out of the absorption someone asks her or him whether a car passed, she or he might be unable to reply.) As we have seen, though in terms of the Dzogchen teachings both thoughts and the sensa that thought interprets are manifestations of the energy or thukje[c] aspect of the Self-*qua*-Base, they

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[a] Hegel (1955).
[b] Hegel (1976).
[c] *thugs rje*.

belong to two different forms of manifestation of this energy or thukje: thoughts are manifestations of the dang[a] form of manifestation of energy, whereas the sensa that we perceive as the so-called "physical" reality are forms of the tsel[b] form of manifestation of energy. Furthermore, as already noted repeatedly and as I have shown by means of a plethora of arguments in other of my works,[c] contrarily to Hegel's beliefs thought can never correspond exactly to what it interprets (below, this will be briefly discussed in terms of the impossibility of the digital to correspond to the analog, but many other relevant arguments will not be considered).

Nonetheless, negation has a leading role in processes of phenomenological development,[35] including the one Hegel dealt with in the *Phenomenology of Mind* (but which he understood invertedly); the point is that, as shown in the above paragraph, negation is involved in the succession of thought-conditioned, human states of mind, rather than in what equivocally may be called "successive conditions of sensitiveness:" unlike sensitiveness, states of mind are determined by the delusorily-valued thoughts conditioning them, and thus are subject to logic—though not to a reversible abstract logic like formal logic as it applies to mathematics. The type of negation that takes place in processes of phenomenological development (as defined in the note to this paragraph) is the one that I have called *phenomenological negation*, which in fact *does conserve what it negates* but, *instead of giving rise to an increase of truth, plenitude and authenticity, results in an increase of error/delusion* (*falsehood*), *fragmentation and unauthenticity*. This negation, like all negations, takes place in thought, and so when it applies to something other than the states of mind determined by delusorily-valued thought, the increase in falsehood lies in the ensuing greater discrepancy between the map, which we confuse with the territory, and the territory itself; however; when it refers to the states of mind determined by delusorily-valued thought, it modifies the territory, for it makes states of mind (which in this case are the territory) become ever more inauthentic.

Double negations such as Sartre's bad faith (which, it should be remembered, is explained as "negating and in the same operation negating one has negated something") and the one Ronald D. Laing illustrated with the diagram of the spiral of pretences reproduced and explained in a previous chapter of this book (which, *qua* explanations circumscribed to secondary process, provide what is no more than a partial and quite inaccurate explanation of a process the most important part of which lies in primary process), are paradigmatic instances of phenomenological double negation as I am understanding the term. Unlike logical processes, which are reversible and thus characteristically atemporal insofar as the negation of what was formerly posited annuls it, phenomenological processes of the kind Laing described involve the irreversibility proper to temporality, in the sense that the negation of whatever was formerly posited conceals it rather than annulling it, and thereby asserts it and sustains it.[36] (In the diagram by Laing reproduced in vol. II of this book, B is a phenomenological negation of A;[37] whereas in a logical process the negation of B *qua* negation of A would again be A, in a phenomenological process of this kind the negation of the negation of A represented as B, rather than being A, is an *imitation of A*—which is what the diagram represents as A_1. Therefore, contrarily to Hegel's *Aufhebung* or sublation, which was supposed to increase

[a] *gdangs*.
[b] *rtsal*.
[c] Capriles (1994a, 1999b, 2000a), etc.

plenitude and truth but which is not found in phenomenological processes (it may seem to occur in non-phenomenological processes such as scientific development, in which new theories very often negate older ones while retaining a great deal of what they posited—as Washburn's[a] example of the negation / incorporation of Newtonian physics by Einstenian physics—but what happens in these cases is that logical negation is applied to some aspects of the older theory but not to other aspects). Thus understood, phenomenological double negation *conserves what it negates* because, *rather than canceling it or dissolving it*, it gives rise to the *illusion of having surpassed it*—and since illusion is a synonym of untruth, phenomenological double negation gives rise to an increase in untruth rather than in truth. Furthermore, we have seen that the Self-*qua*-Base is an undivided continuum, that our fragmentary perception of this continuum is a function of the basic error or delusion that the Buddha called *avidya* and that Heraclitus called *lethe*, and that the gradual increase of this error or delusion as the cosmic cycle proceeds, gives rise to a proportional increase of our fragmentary perception; since phenomenological negation increases error / delusion insofar as it gives rise to a new pretence and a new deceit, rather than increasing truth, plenitude and authenticity, it increases falsehood, fragmentation and unauthenticity. This is substantiated by the fact that the research by ethnoecologists in the Amazon that will be reported below in this chapter has shown that "primitive" human beings had an awareness of interconnections that allowed them to *improve* biodiversity, whereas the research by Tom Dale and Vernon Gill Carter that will also be reported below, as well as the current ecological crisis, show that modern humans have such an unawareness of interconnections as to have produced a technology allowing us to destroy segments of the web of life, whereby we have destroyed biodiversity and in general the physical basis of life to such a degree that presently the survival of life on the planet is at stake. The philosophy of history that Hegel laid down in the *Phenomenology of Mind* refused to see that the only negation that conserves what it negates is the phenomenological negation explained here, and in order to support the myth of a gradual increase in truth and wholeness invented his *Aufhebung*—which, as we have seen, is a negation that only existed in Hegel's fantasy.

(The processes I call "phenomenological" are those involving the succession of states of being rather than the succession of systems of though built on the basis of secondary process / operative thinking logic; in processes of this kind, the only negation involved that is different from logical negation is the one under discussion, which increases fragmentation and falsehood. Understanding processes of this kind as involving Hegel's *Aufhebung* or sublation would only be possible on the basis of the false Hegelian premise [implicit in Engels',[b38] even though he rejected the idealism on the basis of this error] that nature and reality in general are a projection of spirit ruled by the secondary process / operative thinking logic that rules thought, but which are self-contradictory and hence can only be described dialectically in terms of contradictions. [The phenomenological double negation that Laing illustrated with the above diagram was contrasted with Hegel's *Aufhebung* or sublation in others of my works.[c]])

Hegel's *Phenomenology of Mind* presents the dialectical process of evolution of humankind as a process of alienation of Mind in time, which comes to an end with the final

[a] Washburn (1995).
[b] Engels (1998/2001).
[c] The definitive explanation of this will be found in Capriles (work in progress 2); previous, less precise explanations were provided in Capriles (1992, 1994a).

surpassing of this alienation. The first stage in this process is that of sense-certainty, in which humans lacking self-certainty or, what in this system is the same, lacking self-consciousness, are aware of sensa as something that is external to them and independent of them, thus failing to realize that all that they perceive as external things are projections of Mind. Then as positions give rise to counter-positions, as the former and the latter unify, and as unifications become new positions, differences between knowledge and truth arise and are surpassed, giving rise to a gradual increase in truth and wholeness; in particular, through the dialectic of the master or lord and the slave or serf, self-consciousness *qua* self-certainty develops, which hitherto was lacking: according to Hegel, in consciousness of self *qua* an autonomous perceiving and acting being, for the first time certainty is the same as its truth, for what is perceived as true is the subject itself rather than something that seems to be external to it. The process goes on, until finally self-consciousness, with the corresponding coincidence of certainty and its truth, recognizes itself in nature, becoming fully aware that nature is no more than its own projection and that in truth it is neither separate nor different from itself. Before this moment, each dialectical stage involved first the difference between knowledge and truth, and then the surpassing of this difference, but now for the first time—in what Hegel called "science," or, more specifically, in what he called the absolute concept—knowledge and truth no longer separate and thus no longer a separation between them may be surpassed. This is, according to Hegel, the end of the dialectical process of the *Phenomenology of Mind*, and hence of the alienation of Mind in time, upon which, in his view, final perfection is achieved as absolute knowledge.

If we apply Laing's diagram to human evolution and history, not as Hegel fancied it, but as interpreted by the traditional cyclic view we have been considering, point A may represent the state of *aletheia* or *vidya*—the absence of the delusion called *lethe* or *avidya* and therefore the absence of the illusion of separateness—corresponding to what I have been calling the Self-*qua*-Path, as manifest in the state of Communion of human beings in the Golden Age, Age of Perfection (*krityayuga*) or Age of Truth (*satyayuga*). (As we saw with regard to Wilber's pre/trans fallacy, the infant's "oceanic feeling" as such is quite different from the manifestation of *aletheia* in the condition of the Self-*qua*-Path or of the Self-*qua*-Fruit; however, as will be shown below, Wilber is utterly wrong in drawing an absolute analogy between ontogenesis and phylogenesis, for human beings in the Primordial Age did not lack the capacity to deal with the world, but on the contrary, judging by the impact aborigines had on Amazonian biodiversity, they dealt with it far more effectively than beings of our time, and as will be shown below, rather than lacking the virtues that manifest as a result of spiritual practice in the context of Wisdom-traditions, they naturally exhibit many of these virtues, which we lack.)

In terms of this interpretation, point B would represent self-consciousness *qua* phenomenological negation of the state represented by A—but which, however, is not the upshot of a "dialectic of lord and serf"—as it arises and, with the passing of time, gradually develops in the post-Communion state. Rather than being, as Hegel believed, the first manifestation of a condition in which certainty is the same as its truth, self-consciousness is the root of the self-impediment that in the poem caused the centipede to fall into the pit, and, as shown in the above quotation from the *Wen-tzu*, attributed to Lao-tzu,[a] is what eradicated intrinsic virtue (i.e., the *te* or virtue inherent in the patency of the *tao*). (How and why self-consciousness eradicates intrinsic virtue was considered in the section of a former

[a] Lao-tzu (1994), chap. 172, pp. 245-7.

chapter dealing with the arising of the Jungian shadow understood in terms of Susan Isaacs' concept of *unconscious phantasy*.)

Finally, in terms of the same interpretation, point A_1, rather than representing the reestablishment of *aletheia* / *vidya* and the concomitant primordial perfection after the term of the cosmic cycle, would symbolize a delusive attainment of the kind that Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche subsumed under the term "spiritual materialism" and that I subsumed under the term "path of darkness." In fact, Hegel's "self-consciousness' self-recognition in Nature," which he posited as the highest possible human attainment, if it were an actual mystical experience, would be one of these delusive attainments, for it would *simulate* the lack of separateness characteristic of the condition represented by A, while *conserving and incorporating the illusion of separateness and self-consciousness* corresponding to B, and as such would be further removed from Truth than preceding states: *qua* phenomenological negation of the negation that Laing's diagram represents as B, it involves greater error / delusion and fragmentation than B and, in general, than all preceding conditions. What Hegel posited as the final result of human evolution is supposed to be a representation that has become infinite in order to include difference within itself, but such a thing is impossible, for representations must be recognizable, and recognition depends upon contrast and exclusion, which imply finiteness: as in the case of the formless absorptions of Buddhism, representations that seem infinite, rather than being infinite, involve the *illusion of* infinitude. Gilles Deleuze was right in noting that attaining the infinite amounted to attaining a universal lack of difference,[a] and, although Deleuze was far from realizing this, if such lack of difference is not to be an absorption of the neutral base-of-all in which we are useless to both human society and ourselves, and in which we waste the possibilities inherent in the human condition, it must be and can only be the one that is attained by going beyond delusory valuation at the root of *samsara* and beyond the unawareness of the true condition of the Base at the root of the neutral condition of the base-of-all, in the condition of the Self-*qua*-Path of Self-*qua*-Fruit. To sum up, the final result of Hegel's process, represented by point A_1 in Laing's diagram, is no more than an *illusion* produced by self-consciousness and involving the self-deceit that Sartre called "bad faith" and that Laing referred to as "elusion."

Søren Kierkegaard denounced Hegel's concept of a transition that, despite not being gradual, never arrives at a breakthrough and always conserves an element of the former stage. The Danish thinker warned against the deceit inherent in reason, which has the function of unifying and identifying, and implied authenticity lay in immersing ourselves in the vortex of existence, not eluding the *Angst* that in his view was inherent in the insurmountable abyss that parts the finite from the infinite, or the forlornness in which the limited subjectivity of the human individual is suspended in the nothingness of *Angst*. Thus he laid the immediate bases of *Existenzphilosophie* and existentialism—as well as of the meta-existential system expounded in this book, in terms of which *Angst* is inherent in self-consciousness, which is spuriousness itself, but according to which refusing to elude *Angst* is far more authentic than eluding it. However, the idea is not to remain stuck in *Angst*, but to use it as a springboard—not in order to take a "leap" (German, *Sprung*; Danish, *Springet*) from the ethical to the religious dimension as in Kierkegaard, but in order to go beyond self-consciousness in the unveiling of the Self-*qua*-Base. As we have seen, Hegel

[a] Deleuze (1995).

disparaged this possibility, implying that any kind of surpassing of differentiation would result in a night in which "all cats are grey."

So far, Hegel's explanation of human evolution and history has been shown to be inverted because it explains as an increase in completeness and perfection what in fact is an increase in the illusory fragmentation that conceals the original completeness and inhibits the original perfection of our true condition. Furthermore, Hegel's system as a whole has been shown to be definitely wrong in viewing the map and the territory as being indistinguishable. Now it is necessary to add that his system further involves the error or drawing a map in exclusively digital terms, in order to represent a territory that is normally experienced as analog. Consider this (slightly modified) quotation from another of my works:[a]

> The analog being continuous and the digital being discontinuous, there cannot be a perfect correspondence between them.[39] This is evident in the case of digital photographs: the greater the number of pixels per square inch (ppi) in the photograph, the less the naked eye will notice the lack of correspondence between the photograph and the object it represents; however, if you look at the picture through a magnifying glass, or through a microscope, you will realize that no matter how high the number of pixels per square inch, there is still an insurmountable gap between the digital picture and the analog object it reproduces. Likewise, if you send a spaceship to Mars, in order to predetermine its trajectory you will have to put many numbers (which are digital representations)[40] after the comma if the engine is to have any chance of reaching its aim—and yet, as the ship advances, its trajectory will have to be constantly modified so that it will not miss its aim. In the case of concepts that are not numbers and their referents, the impossibility of correspondence if far more evident, for as shown by the Madhyamikas the attempt to establish a perfect correspondence between the ones and the others results in sheer contradiction.

The Madhyamikas in India and Zenon of Elea in Greece were aware that digital maps cannot correspond precisely to the analog territory, and that attempts to make it correspond univocally to it result in contradiction; therefore, the former based on these facts many of their refutations of the premises of common sense and of metaphysical and religious fictions, and the latter used them for their respective purposes (which seem to have been contrary to those of the Madhyamikas[41]). This, however, would not have worked in the case of Hegel, for as we have seen he thought conceptual maps were indistinguishable from the territory they interpret, and the fact that attempts to make the map correspond exactly to the territory inevitably resulted in contradictions in the map meant "things themselves are contradictory;"[b] in fact, according to Hegel, in order to be correct, the map had to violate the principle of non-contradiction (for example, for something to move, it would have to simultaneously be and not be in the same place).[42]

Spinoza referred to an error consisting in "the incomplete and abstract." Spinoza was a rationalist and his views differ radically from the ones expounded in this book; however, the latter coincide with his wording, for the error or delusion that developed throughout the cosmic cycle involves the *incomplete*—in the sense of "fragmentary"—comprehension resulting from the *abstraction* of segments of the given. Though, as shown

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[a] Capriles (2004).
[b] Hegel (1976).

in a previous chapter, the negations consciousness carries out in terms of the digital code of secondary process catalyze the development of the delusion called *lethe* or *avidya* toward its own *reductio ad absurdum*, this development itself proceeds analogically rather than digitally. This was ignored by Hegel, who was right in noting the relation between the dialectical process and the logical procedure of *reductio ad absurdum*, and in asserting that error was revealed as such by the contradictions it produced (a principle that, as will be shown below in terms of the objections raised by McTaggart Ellis, applies to error as conceived in this book, but not as Hegel conceived it), but who erred in limiting this *reductio ad absurdum* to contradictions inherent in the theses that manifest in secondary process in each dialectical stage and that he wrongly took to lie not only in the map but also in the territory from which in his view the map was indistinguishable and which was but the map's projection, to be achieved through the consequences that showed those theses to involve a contradiction. As we have seen, the contradiction that develops throughout human evolution and history is one inherent in the basic delusion called *avidya* or *lethe*, and its *reductio ad absurdum* is completed at the end of the cosmic cycle, as it produces the ecological crisis that puts at stake the continuity of life on the planet (and which manifests on the plane of the ecosphere, on that of society, and on that of the individual).

Provided that we keep in mind that human evolution and history consist in the development of a delusion characterized by incompleteness and abstraction, that the development of this delusion takes place mainly in the analog primary process, that the map is not the territory, and that digital maps cannot correspond to the analog territory of the given, it may be valid to say that, from a digital standpoint that does not at all exhaust the process, that evolution and history may be seen as a succession of positions, negations and unifications-that-become-positions. However, it must be kept in mind that what this process does is to increase and reveal as such the original delusion / error / contradiction, the gradual development of which gave rise to the instrumental reason that conceived and implemented science and the technological project concomitant with it (for, as Herbert Marcuse correctly noted, science is by its very nature instrumental, and so it can but deliver the means for domination of the natural environment and other human beings[a][43]), and which in its turn was boosted by this project, which gradually transformed into conflict the contradiction inherent in basic delusion and progressively obstructed the functioning at the root of this delusion—thus proving that the latter, its technological project and the type of reason at the root of this project, do not work, and making it possible for the original delusion / error / contradiction to fall by its own weight.

The above is based on the Hegelian thesis that, in human evolution and history, error reveals itself as such by the contradictions it produces. However, this idea does not seem to work in the context of Hegel's system, for, as McTaggart Ellis showed,[b] on the one hand Hegel insisted that reality and the ideas interpreting it (which as we have seen in his view are inseparable and indivisible) are inherently self-contradictory (so that, for example, for something to move it had at the same time to be and not to be in the same place) and, on the other, he asserted that error unveils through the contradictions it generates. If all is contradictory and in order to describe reality accurately it is necessary to do so in terms of contradictory statements, how could contradictions reveal error as such?[44] Nevertheless, as

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[a] "From Negative to Positive Thinking: Technological Rationality and the Logic of Domination," ch. 6 of Marcuse (1964).
[b] McTaggart (1931, 1999-2000, 2000).

will be shown below, the thesis according to which error reveals itself as such by the contradictions it produces *does* work in the system outlined here, in which it has been compounded with the Marxist principle that "whenever there is a difference there is a contradiction" and with Marx's thesis that in order to resolve unjustified social, economic and political contradictions (to which in our age ecological contradictions should be added), these must reveal themselves as such so that they turn into conflict and this may drive us to surpass them. However, for this to make sense I have to explain in most precise terms what is it that I mean by contradiction—particularly insofar as in various works I have insisted that according to *Madhyamika* philosophy the same territory may be validly (though not correctly)[45] understood in terms of mutually contradictory maps,[a] which implies that contradiction in description does not imply that there is error or delusion, and therefore I could be accused of incurring in an error similar to the one McTaggart denounced in Hegel.

What I mean by contradiction does *not* lie in the simultaneous application of contradictory concepts to the same segment of reality, but in *our experience of this as contradictory*, which results from the delusory valuation of those concepts. This may be thoroughly understood in terms of the following excerpt from a recent work of mine:[b46]

> Chandrakirti [asserted] that one should not have "own mind," that one must not affirm anything "from one's own heart," or that one should not make "self-directed" or "interior-directed assertions" (Tib., *rang rgyud du khes len pa*) — and therefore that one should only make "other-directed" or "exterior-directed assertions" (Tib., *gzhan ngo khas len*).[47] "To have own mind," "to affirm from one's heart" or "to make self-directed / interior-directed assertions" was the same as "to have theses of one's own:" to take as true whatever one thinks or asserts without the intention to deceive others, and to take the contrary of this as false. Therefore, "not to have own mind" or its synonyms expressed an essential trait of fully realized individuals, for, insofar as they are utterly free from [the delusory valuation of] concepts and other thoughts, they do not take anything they say as being absolutely true or false: whatever they say arises beyond [delusory valuation] as the spontaneous function of Awakening that naturally leads beings beyond *samsara*...
>
> Since, as we have seen, "other-directed" or "exterior-directed" assertions are those that are made without believing them to be true, the lies told by ordinary beings belong to this category. However, when ordinary beings speak, independently of whether they "lie" or "say the truth," their assertions are totally incorrect, in the sense that they are a function of delusion — and whatever is thought or said under delusion is incorrect, for delusion is itself incorrectness. The point is that, since they cannot avoid [the delusory valuation of] their own thoughts and assertions, ordinary beings wrongly take their "interior-directed" assertions to be absolutely true, and wrongly take their lies to be totally untrue: being deluded, in contradiction with *Prajñaparamita Sutras* like the *Vajrachchedika*[c] and with *Madhyamika* thought, they take forms to be either existent or nonexistent, and if they take something to be existent they will perceive themselves as lying if they say it is nonexistent (and vice-versa): this is the reason why all they say is incorrect, and it is also the reason why, if they assert what they believe to be untrue while being connected to a polygraph, the machine will detect a lie. Contrariwise, whatever the Buddhas say, being always "other-

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[a] Capriles (1994a, 2004, 2005), etc.

[b] Capriles (2005).

[c] *Vajracchedikaprajñaparamita*; Tib., *rdo rje gcod pa* (*Diamond Cutter Sutra*). (A Complete Catalogue of the Tibetan Buddhist Canon [Tohoku University catalogue of the sde ge edition of the Canon, Ed. H. Ui *et al*., Sendai, 1934], 16).

directed" or "exterior-directed," is totally correct, for insofar as they are totally free from [the delusory valuation of] thought (and thus utterly undeceived and free from the power of conventional truth — which, as Gendün Chöphel shows in his text,[a] is "deluded truth"), they do not experience their assertions as being either true or false: they do not take forms as being either existent of nonexistent. Therefore, if they assert something and immediately negate it, in neither case will the polygraph register a lie: This is the reason why the *Maharatnakutasutra*,[b] quoted in Gendün Chöphel's text,[c] says, "Existence and nonexistence contradict each other; pure and impure also contradict each other; because of contradiction, suffering cannot be calmed; when contradiction is no more, suffering comes to an end..." "Surpassing contradiction" does not mean "never asserting the opposite of whatever one affirmed in the past;" it means going beyond the [delusory valuation of thought] that causes one to perceive a contradiction in making contradictory assertions, and that hence causes the polygraph to detect a lie when one of the two contradictory assertions is made.

In fact, insofar as the assertions made by Awake Ones are part of the spontaneous activities whereby they lead beings to Awakening, upon making them they (are) totally beyond action, beyond intention, beyond self-consciousness and beyond judging in terms of right or wrong. In the *Bodhicharyavatara* we read:[d]

"[Objection] How can there exist a liberated being?

"[*Madhyamika*] He is false imagination in the mind of another, but he does not exist because of conventional truth on his own part. After something has been established it exists; if not, it does not exist even as conventional truth."

The above means that Buddhists who lived at the time of Shakyamuni through their false imagination perceived Shakyamuni as a Buddha, but Shakyamuni, who was not subject to false imagination, did neither perceive himself as a Buddha, nor perceive others as deluded sentient beings; therefore, in all that he asserted there was no own-mind, and hence his assertions were ... "assertions made from the perspectives of others"...

The stanzas by Shantideva coincide with Jigme Lingpa's assertion that, though Buddhist sentient beings may perceive Buddhas as carrying out countless activities on their behalf, Buddhas perceive no beings that must be helped, and harbor no intentions to help beings. The point is that, since Buddhas are free from [the delusory valuation of] the threefold thought-structure (Tib., *'khor gsum*), whatever they do is an instance of what is called "action and fruit [of action] devoid of the concept of the three spheres" (*'khor gsum rnam par mi rtog pa'i las dang 'bras bu*): from their own standpoint they are beyond activity — and yet sentient beings, if they are devout Buddhists and are able to recognize the Buddhas as such, see the latter as carrying out countless activities on their behalf. This is why the terms "other-directed" and "exterior-directed" do not categorize the actionless activities of the Buddhas precisely: Buddhas perceive no others and no exterior, and therefore, although here I decided to follow the terminology that prevails in Chöphel's book and call their assertions "other-directed" or "exterior-directed," in truth these belong to a category different from that of the "exterior-directed" or "other-directed" assertions made by sentient beings — which are the lies they say — and properly speaking should not be referred to by the same words, but should be called "assertions from the perspectives of others." And this is also why "purpose" is a term that does not apply to the Buddhas.

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[a] Chöphel (2005).

[b] *Maharatnakutadharmaparyayashatasahasrikagranthasutra*; Tib., *dkon mchog brtsegs pa chen po'i chos kyi rnam grangs le'u stong phrag brgya pa'i mdo* (*Heap of Jewels Sutra*). Peking Edition of the Tibetan Tripitaka (Tokyo-Kyoto: Tibetan Tripitaka Research Foundation, 1956) 760, Vol.22-24.

[c] Chöphel (2005).

[d] Shantideva (1996), IX. 107, p. 126.

In turn, superior Bodhisattvas (which are those in the third and fourth Bodhisattva paths, or, which is the same, those ranging between the first and tenth levels [Skt., *bhumi*; Tib., *sa*]) have no "own mind" and hold no theses "from the heart" while they are in the state of Contemplation (Skt., *samahita*; Tib., *mnyam bzhag*), but they do so again while in the state of post-Contemplation (Skt., *prishthalabdha*; Tib., *rjes thob*), in which [the delusory valuation of] thought has been reactivated. However, as they advance on the Path, delusion is progressively neutralized, and so the strength of [the delusory valuation of] thought in the state of post-Contemplation is progressively mitigated — which implies that the strength of the delusive appearances that manifest in that state diminishes. Furthermore, having experientially realized, while in the Contemplation state, that the illusions resulting from [the delusory valuation of] thought are mere illusions, while in the post-Contemplation state they maintain some awareness of this fact (which is why the relative truth that manifests in this state is called "correct relative truth" [Skt., *tathyasamvritisatya*; Tib., *yang dag pa'i kun rdzob bden pa*]). Therefore, in this state they posit theses that are mainly "other-directed" or "exterior-directed," but that to a great extent are also "interior-directed" (and, in fact, in order to continue on the Path they still need to believe that there is a final Buddhahood and a means to proceed toward it, as well as a series of Dharma truths to be accepted); therefore, the conceptual positions they adopt are to a great extent correct.

Finally, Bodhisattvas who have not yet reached the third Bodhisattva path (or, which is the same, the first level) and who therefore have never gone beyond the state of "inverted / incorrect relative truth" (Skt., *mithyasamvritisatya*; Tib., *log pa'i kun rdzob bden pa*) in which there is no awareness of the illusion-like character of phenomena, in order to lead both themselves and others to Awakening, must posit from the heart theses that as such are wholly "self-directed" or "interior-directed:" they must posit from the heart all that is written in canonical sources having definitive meaning[a] (but do not have to do likewise with what is written in sources of provisional meaning[b], for in the case of the latter they have to ascertain the true import of the text and then posit from the heart what they have ascertained).[48]

Thus the basic contradiction that must unveil as such for it to become conflict, so that finally it may be surpassed, is the one inherent in the error or delusion called *avidya* or *lethe*, which involves the fragmentary perception that has as its condition of possibility a narrow focus of conscious awareness / low energetic-volume-determining-the-scope-of-awareness and that I characterized in Spinozian terms as involving incompleteness and abstraction, and which, rather than consisting in the application of contradictory concepts to the same segment of reality at the same time, lies in the delusory valuation of thought that makes us believe conceptual maps correspond exactly to the territory they interpret and / or mistake them for it, and perceive contradictory concepts (such as *a* and *not-a*) as mutually incompatible. It is due to this error that when we human beings interpret the territory in terms of conceptual maps, we cannot simultaneously entertain *a* and *not-a* without experiencing a contradiction. Since *a* and *not-a* are not in the territory but in the map, and since no map can correspond exactly to the territory it interprets, Hegel was wrong in claiming that reality was itself contradictory.

The Marxist principle according to which "whenever there is a difference there is a contradiction" certainly could not mean that, so far as there are mountains and plains, wetness and dryness, males and females, etc., there will be contradictions to overcome. In

[a] Skt., *nitartha*; Tib., ngedön (*nges don*).
[b] Skt., *neyartha*; Tib., drangdön (*drang don*).

Marxism, it is implicitly understood that this assertion is circumscribed to the social, economic and political ambits. However, as shown in the above quotation, in these planes, as in all other ones, we perceive contradictions only so far as the delusory valuation of thought is working. Hence from the perspective of the above quotation,[a] which is that of the present book, the thesis according to which "whenever there is a difference there is a contradiction" could only make sense if by "difference" we understood "experience of differences" (or, if we preferred to employ the language of Je Tsongkhapa, "experience of differences as inherently existent"), for such experience is a manifestation and a function of the basic contradiction that is the delusion called *lethe* or *avidya*. Thus from this perspective it would convenient to reformulate the Marxist principle under consideration as follows: "wherever differentiation—or, which is the same, conceptualization—is delusorily valued, there is a contradiction (i.e., a manifestation of the basic contradiction that is *avidya* / *lethe*)."

Does the above mean that, since contradiction does not lie in the apparently objective situations we perceive as unjust, but in their delusorily valuation, we must get rid of delusory valuation and let injustices be? Of course not. All injustices result from the development of delusory valuation, and at the present point in degenerative evolution they have achieved their *reductio ad absurdum*, for the only way the human species can survive in an extremely overpopulated, polluted, ill planet such as ours is if a small portion of the global population stops consuming more than all the rest put together, and all achieve equitable, relatively frugal levels of consumption.[49] In fact, survival and the inception of a New Age of Communion and harmony depend on overcoming the delusion involving a narrow focus of conscious awareness and the delusory valuation of thought, together with the products of this delusion—and, among the latter, specially the antagonisms between human beings and the unjustified social, economic and political differences between them, and the hostility of humans to the rest of the ecosphere at the root of what Gregory Bateson referred to as "conscious purpose versus nature."[b] Since in our time delusory valuation has become so strong, all human beings experience seemingly "objective" divisions as contradictions (even though many may not be willing to admit this) and have to face the pain and conflict issuing from them; therefore, we have the duty of working toward resolving those contradictions.

Thus the "true" contradiction impelling human degenerative evolution lies in the basic delusion involving a narrow focus of conscious awareness and the delusory valuation of thought, and the unveiling of contradiction as such must give rise to an irrepressible impulse to overcome this basic delusion. However, as noted above, so long as we perceive "objective" situations as contradictions and we and / or other individuals suffer because of them, it is our responsibility to work toward changing these situations, in no lesser measure than it is our responsibility to rid ourselves of the basic delusion that is the ultimate source of the situations in question. Conversely, though some may feel the need to put an end to the situations they perceive as "objective" to be so urgent and imperative that they should postpone the task of overcoming basic delusion in order to dedicate all of their time and energy to change these situations, since the law of inverted effect is inherent in basic delusion, all actions aimed at modifying those situations, if based on this delusion, will give rise to results contrary to the ones intended.

[a] Capriles (2005).
[b] Bateson (1968); also in Bateson (1971).

Should the above be understood to mean that we have to wait until we have rid ourselves of delusion to begin working to act on the ecological, social and political planes? Since this might delay change beyond the threshold at which the destruction of the web of life becomes irreparable, we must work simultaneously on all planes. (Since I discussed this matter to great length in other works,[a] I will not enter into its detailed discussion here.) The following paragraphs may illustrate the reasons why we cannot give rise to a new Age of Truth / Golden Age or to a Millennium of Harmony and Fulfillment so long as we are possessed by the basic delusion called *avidya* or *lethe*, and at the same time show the sense in which the dialectical principle of the contraries' change into their opposites may validly posited.

In terms of the relation between primary process and secondary process, or, which is the same, between the computations of the brain's two hemispheres, one of which is analog and the other digital, it must be noted that, since in the former, which is determinant, the emphasis is on the type of relations taking place between individuals rather than on who is who in those relations, and since in it there is no possibility of entertaining negatives, once a type of primary process relations develop (for example, instrumental subject-object relations) there is no way conscious intention, which works in terms of digital secondary process, may either undo them at will or circumscribe them to one field. On the contrary, as shown in a previous chapter (IN VOL. II OF THIS BOOK?), any attempt by conscious intention to control analog primary process will be subject to the law of inverted effect and produce results opposite to the ones intended. This is a reason why Jürgen Habermas' proposal that relations between humans should be communicative and relations between humans and the natural environment be instrumental[b] (which might have been inspired by Engels' idea that in the communism that he and Marx posited as last stage of human society, rather than dominating human beings, we would dominate nature and inanimate things) is impracticable—and, were it practicable, it would not solve anything, for the current crisis is the result of our instrumental relations with the natural environment.[50] It is also the reason why Emilio Estiú was right when he noted that,[c]

> A subject surrounded by mere objects ends up objectifying the subjects themselves. This is why [Heidegger says that) "modern science and the totalitarian State are, at the same time, consequences and sequences in the essence of technology."

And it is also the reason why (to some extent under the influence of Heidegger's views, which in this regard are quite sound,[d] and to some extent due to what has been taken to be a misinterpretation of Husserl's views[e][51]) Herbert Marcuse asserted that the natural science of modernity is by its very structure and function committed to a view of nature as an object to be manipulated and controlled; that a science of human beings based on the model of the natural sciences is thereby committed to an analogous view of those beings as

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[a] Principally, in Capriles (1994a), but also in some minor works. A book in English circulating under my signature, dated 1988 and claiming to have been published in Mérida, Venezuela, but with no reference to the publishers, does not express my views in this regard.

[b] Habermas (1982).

[c] Estiú (1980). The words by Heidegger quoted by Estiú are from (1977), German Edition of 1950 (Frankfurt am Main), p. 267.

[d] Heidegger (1977).

[e] Husserl (1970).

objects to be manipulated and controlled; and that therefore there is a necessary relation between the scientific domination of nature and the scientific domination of human beings.[a]

The dynamics of the relations between primary process and secondary process also explains why, just as in the case of the individual going through the inner journey represented by the *Divine Comedy* discussed in the seventh chapter of this book, in the degenerative evolution of our species the primary process relationships that do not work have to increase until they achieve their *reductio ad absurdum* in ecological crisis and, upon going beyond a threshold level, spontaneously collapse like a elastic band that breaks upon being stretched beyond its maximum resistance—which is what happens at the end of the aeon or cosmic cycle, when delusion, and therefore the *phenomenon of being* and the *experience of time as such*, disintegrate.[52] And just as in the case of the individual, this comes to pass because the discomfort produced by the patterns that must be overcome activates a positive feedback loop that pushes the organism in the direction of its symptoms—and that, as Bateson noted, could correspond to what Freud called *Thanatos*, but that, as I have noted, is catalyzed by consciousness' reactions in terms of secondary process.[53] This is why Indian mystic-philosopher Sri Aurobindo asserted that:[b54]

> The end of a stage of evolution is normally characterized by a powerful recrudescence of all that has to go out of the evolution.

In the development of delusion that, as we have seen, is catalyzed by the positive feedback loop inherent in the relations between primary process and secondary process, as primary process relations develop, from the limited standpoint of secondary process it may be to some extent valid to see this development in terms of a succession of positions, negations and unifications-that-become-positions. Thus, the phenomenon of "transformation of the opposites into each other" that in Hegel's view characterizes dialectical development, and which Marxism applies in its own way to the succession of economic and social systems, could be said to result from the fact that, while the primary process relation develops, in secondary process the position of actors change. For example, in a relation of oppression, the oppressed revolt, but since the relation of oppression has not changed in the primary process of the insurgents, when they seize power they will take the place of the oppressors—that is, will switch the secondary-process-position they occupy in the primary-process-relation of oppression—and so, though they impose new doctrines and systems, they will oppress others just as their predecessors had done (and perhaps even more so)—to be likely overthrown at some point by those they had oppressed. Thus, in the French Revolution the bourgeoisie toppled the aristocracy that had oppressed it, taking the place of the oppressor and oppressing the proletariat and the peasants far more than they had been oppressed before. And something similar occurred later on with the Bolshevik Revolution (though in this case most of those who took power did not belong to the social class that, according to Marx, should implement the "proletariat's dictatorship"—which, by the way, because of its very structure and function could never lead to the extinction of the State and therefore of the power of some human beings over the rest[55]).

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[a] "From Negative to Positive Thinking: Technological Rationality and the Logic of Domination:" ch. 6 of Marcuse (1964).

[b] Aurobindo (1955); Satprem (1973).

This means that the primary process relation gradually accentuates itself while, in secondary process, somehow subjects may be said to switch places. For example, in the development of the cosmic cycle, initially the state of Communion free of delusion alternates with a state of incipient, mild delusion in which primary process relations are of a kind that may be termed "pan-communicative." As Communion becomes hardly accessible to most human beings, delusion becomes more pronounced, and, as will be shown later on, with the arising of the vertical relation that is expressed in art as the rise of the gods, primary process relations become instrumental; then, through the positive feedback loop that, as we have seen, is impelled by conscious reactions in secondary process, this instrumentality is exacerbated until it achieves its *reductio ad absurdum* in ecological crisis—which is the *reductio ad absurdum* of the basic delusion that, upon developing beyond a certain point, manifested as instrumental primary process relations. The outcome of this is that finally instrumental relations, and not only these relations but delusion as well, may be spontaneously disconnected. Since to some extent from the standpoint of secondary process the development of the cosmic cycle may be seen as a dialectical development, in a limited sense it may be said that when delusion is disconnected the dialectical process is disconnected.

If, following Bateson, we affirm that the "positive feedback loop" that is the motor of the process of experiential *reductio ad absurdum*, and that process itself, are what Freud called *Thanatos*, then we have to say that the unfolding of delusion that is the true reality behind that which Hegel called "dialectical process" is blindly and waywardly driven and catalyzed by *Thanatos* (which, despite its being associated with tropisms such as the one described by Brodey and discussed in a previous chapter, is *not* an instinct, and depends on our intentional actions) toward the threshold at which the spontaneous liberation of this dynamics in the manifestation of the Self-*qua*-Path introduces a dynamics of spontaneous disconnection of Thanatic positive feedback loops, re-orienting the process in an obviously healthy direction. Then, the process is no longer catalyzed solely by the *Thanatos*, but also by the repeated spontaneous liberation of the basic contradiction (basic human delusion), and by the systemic Wisdom arising from recurrent spontaneous liberation. This reintroduces the Communion that was so frequent in the Era of Perfection, Age of Truth or Golden Age, which in this case is the manifestation of the Self-*qua*-Path, and the frequent repetition of which progressively mitigates delusory valuation and results in an awareness of illusoriness, so that when the delusion called *avidya* or *lethe* manifests, it does so in a much milder way, as it did in the Primordial Age (where, as we will see below, this awareness of illusoriness was accompanied by the capacity to recognize as such the different modes of experience, so that people knew they had to avoid the "real" physical tiger but not so the tiger of dream states); therefore, post-humans will not be as different from primal humans as some could imagine.

The above shows that the development of the species through the cosmic cycle is analogous to the experience of the aeon that takes place in the practice of Dzogchen and which is catalyzed by practices such as those of Thögel and the Yangthik: the process begins with systemic activities of the type I have called *morphodysgenesis*, which go on until what I have called *metamorphy* occurs; then continues with systemic activities that, as we have seen, involve what I have called *morphoeugenesis* but that go beyond *morphogenesis*; finally, the systemic activities work toward the consolidation of the Awake condition, just as does the process that Dante represented as an ascension through successive heavens.

In this section I have considered Hegel's thought at some length. Schopenhauer, who in his book *On the Basis of Morality* asserted that Hegel scribbled nonsense quite unlike any mortal before him, except perhaps for those in the madhouse,[a] might have complained that I took Hegel too seriously and made his thought seem too coherent. Though I agree that there is a lot of nonsense in Hegel's works, and I regard his basic views as being far more inverted than Marx and Engels ever believed, the fact that I have been able to use many of Hegel's categories and basic ideas shows that, if the views I express in this book were plausible, there could be no doubt that the German philosopher, no matter how much *hubris* he may have exhibited and how much he may have tried to hide his weaknesses by scribbling nonsense, had quite a few valid, most relevant intuitions. The same applies to Marx and even Engels: though (to some extent here, and to a far greater extent elsewhere[b]) I have shown the blatant contradiction between their aims and the methods through which they intended to achieve those aims, and though I agree with the general objections raised by nonviolent anarchist prince Piotr Kropotkin, with the refutations of their conception of the stone age carried out by anthropologists and ethnologists including Pierre Clastres and Marshal Sahlins, and with the criticisms that anarchists like Abraham Guillén and libertarian Marxists such as Rosa Luxemburg, Anton Pannekoek and Cornelius Castoriadis directed against the praxis of officially Marxist states, the fact that in various of my works I have been able to use some of their categories and basic ideas shows that, if the views I express in the works in question were plausible, there could be no doubt that the couple of German revolutionaries had quite a few valid and most relevant intuitions.

Wilber's Modernist Inversion of the Perennial Philosophy of History
And the Traditionalist Movement's Reactionary Distortion of It

We have seen repeatedly that being is the most basic of delusive phenomena, and that having more being, rather than amounting to comprising more truth and being closer to the unveiling of the Self-*qua*-Base (as Ken Wilber and other Western authors seem to believe it is the case), amounts to having less truth and further concealing the Self-*qua*-Base. In the preceding chapter, the gradation of being was related to human phylogenesis, and although it was shown that being increases with as human spiritual and social evolution go on (a point with which I believe Wilber and his like would possibly agree), this increase of being and the concomitant, proportional acceleration of our subjective experience of the passing of time, were explained as an increase of delusion toward its empirical *reductio ad absurdum*—which, as shown throughout this chapter, in phylogenesis is achieved when delusion, in its attempts to improve the human condition by technological means, gives rise to the current ecological crisis, which unless delusion be surpassed and a radical change in all planes be achieved, would destroy our species and possibly all life on this planet. The crumbling of delusion would be the crumbling of being and time, and would allow a new cycle to begin.

Wilber's views concerning human phylogenesis, like those of the Theosophical Society, despite sharing the merit of upholding democratic values (which, however, have been allegedly betrayed by the Indian and other branches of the Society), are clear upshots

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[a] Schopenhauer (1965).
[b] Capriles (1994a).

of the modern paradigm, which has conditioned us to view human spiritual and social evolution as a process of progressive improvement leading to a future condition of perfection, and has simultaneously furthered scientism—to such an extent, that most people (including critics of modernity such as the so-called "postmodern" philosophers and sociologists, and transpersonal psychologists who dared to contest the prevailing views concerning human sanity) shy before contesting scientism[56] and find scandalous the degenerative view of spiritual and social evolution. Only a few independent writers and thinkers (such as, among others, Steven Taylor,[a] with whose egalitarian views I sympathize), together with the elitist members of the extreme right-wing Traditionalist movement[57] (such as René Guénon,[b] Frithjof Schuon,[c] Martin Lings[d] and Jean Biès[e]), have dared to publicly profess and expound the degenerative vision of human evolution and history. However, although the Traditionalist movement has the merit of rejecting scientism and the progressive view proper to modernity, it exhibits reactionary capital vices, such as seeking the restoration of the Muslim Caliphate (in which it coincides with al-Qaida) or some similar medieval theocracy, and adamantly rejecting all non-creationist and non-theist views. In this regard, the Middle Way is the one expressed in this book, which agrees that the process of human evolution is a degenerative one, but rather than positing theism or creationism, or insisting on the supposed need to revert to a previous stage of history, proposes that the current historical process be allowed to go ahead, but be catalyzed by traditional wisdom and concomitant spiritual methods, so that the *reductio ad absurdum* of delusion and of all that arose with it, rather than resulting in the destruction of humankind, may give rise to a New Age of harmony such as the Millennium announced in the *Kalachakra Tantra* and so on, or the next Golden Age, Era of Truth or Age of Perfection—but which in either case should involve a direct democracy in which all turn toward the wisest for counsel.

In fact, despite the abundant, striking evidence supporting the degenerative view of human evolution and history,[f] Ken Wilber decidedly sided with Eurocentric, neo-colonial social-spiritual evolutionisms such as those of Jürgen Habermas[g] and Beck & Cowan,[h] which he compounded with the mistaken conception of ontogenesis in terms of the "spectrum of consciousness" refuted in the preceding chapter,[58] to posit a precise correspondence between phylogenesis and ontogenesis, making the former involve the same stages he posited with regard to the latter, and concluding that "primitive" human beings were incapable of going beyond a quite low stage of "spiritual evolution," and therefore that Awakening was barred to them (though in 2000a he made this rule more flexible). Steven Taylor summarizes Wilber's views in this regard:[i]

> On the one hand there is what Wilber calls the 'Retro-romantic' view, which holds that primal peoples were more 'spiritual' than modern human beings. They possessed a strong

[a] Taylor (2003, 2005).
[b] Guénon (1945, 1947/1991, 2003).
[c] Schuon (1984).
[d] Lings (2002).
[e] Biès (1985).
[f] Among the works that collect relevant evidence from many source I find worth mentioning Capriles (1994a, 2000b), and, most overwhelmingly, Taylor (2003, 2005).
[g] Habermas (1979).
[h] Beck & Cowan (1996).
[i] Taylor (2003), p. 61.

sense of connection to the cosmos and an awareness of esoteric forces and phenomena, both of which we have lost. With the development of our powerful intellect and strong sense of ego—and especially with the development of modern industrial civilization—we 'Fell' away from their higher state of being.

But according to Wilber (e.g., 1995), this is to fall victim to the pre/trans fallacy. Applying his spectrum of consciousness model to phylogenetic development, Wilber argues that primal peoples were at a pre-personal level of consciousness. The hunter-gatherers of the Paleolithic Era belonged to what he calls the typhonic stage of evolution, which is characterized by 'magical thinking', including voodoo practices, taboos, and an animistic worldview. The farmers of the Neolithic Era, beginning around 10,000 BCE, belonged to the mythic stage, where individuals began to realize that magic no longer works and instead projected the existence of elaborate systems of gods, demons, and other forces. At around 2,500 BCE the 'solar ego stage' began, with the 'low egoic' phase lasting until 500 BCE when the current 'high ego' began. Only at this stage did human beings become capable of rationality and hypothetico-deductive reasoning; and only at this stage did human beings become capable of experiencing the higher transpersonal levels, including nirvikalpa samadhi itself. Every age has an 'average' level of consciousness, and some gifted individuals are able to 'jump' from that level to the higher realms, but because their average level was relatively low, earlier human beings could not leap the full height of the spectrum. Even during the mythic stage individuals could only 'peak' at the psychic realms, which they attained with the help of shamanic rituals and trances (Wilber, 1981, 1995). Recently, however, Wilber (2000a) has modified this view, and now suggests that "a truly developed shaman in a magical culture, having evolved various postconventional capacities, would be able to authentically experience the transpersonal realms (mostly the psychic, but also, on occasion, *subtle and perhaps causal*)" (p. 146, my italics).

We have seen that, according to Wilber, the final level of spiritual evolution lies in the attainment of the ninth fulcrum, which is the one he calls causal, and the associated full realization of the tenth fulcrum—the absolute, which would be the source of all other levels. However, before 2000a he claimed that before 500 BCE it was impossible for any human being to attain this realm (which he makes correspond to full Awakening), and also that average individuals belonging to primal peoples of the Stone Age and tribal peoples of our time do not go beyond fulcrum-2 or in the best of cases fulcrum-3—though in 2000a he modified this view and claimed that (though very rarely) it may be possible for "a truly developed shaman" to experience the seventh and on occasion the eighth, and perhaps even the ninth fulcrum. Furthermore, according to our author, from the spiritual perspective, since its beginnings humankind has been in a process of perfecting propelled by the *atman telos* of evolution, and taking place either through a series of leads or through a slow progressive forward movement[a]—which leads to the conclusion that the state of mind that gave rise to the current ecological crisis, and that if not surpassed will put an end to human society and quite likely human life and perhaps all life on this planet, is the highest stage achieved so far in this process of perfecting!

I do not know whether or not Wilber was influenced by the Theosophical Society, but at any rate what he has done to the traditional view of evolution and history of the Wisdom traditions he claims to follow, practice and vindicate, is very similar to what the Theosophical Society did to the exoteric Buddhist doctrine of rebirth: they insisted that, just as Darwin's view of evolution implied perfecting and progress, so it had to be with

[a] Wilber (1981).

rebirth, which therefore could occur from lower species to "higher" ones, but not the other way around—so that, for example, animals could take rebirth as humans but not the reverse. And, just like the founding mothers and fathers of the Theosophical Society seem to have believed they had improved the views of Buddhism by making them agree with modern scientist beliefs which they took for an ultimately true revelation of modernity, Wilber seems to believe he bettered Wisdom traditions by ridding them of views that modern evolutionism has "surpassed." However, all that he has done is to express the neo-colonial prejudice according to which Europe and its extensions are at the fore-front of a process of universal perfecting, whereas primal peoples are "backward" and in some way inferior—which he compounded with the Theosophical view that Asian traditions are extremely valuable but have been surpassed by the scientific evolution led by Europe and its extensions (and, one must assume, in particular by his own theories).

The true paradox with Wilber's evolutionistic Eurocentrism is that it outright contradicts some of the central views of Wisdom-traditions that Wilber vindicates in his writings—namely, the degenerative vision of spiritual and social evolution and the view that the most notorious products of this evolution are noxious. In particular, Wilber has studied under H. H. Pema Norbu (Penor) Rinpoche the teachings of Nyingmapa Tibetan Buddhism (in particular, those of the supreme vehicle of this tradition, which is the *Atiyoga*-Dzogchen), which uphold the degenerative view of evolution and explain it in terms of the already considered succession of four[a] or three[b] eras, beginning with an era (*yuga*) of perfection (*krita*) and truth (*satya*), and concluding with a destruction and renewal at the end of an era (*yuga*) of darkness or blackness (*kali*). If Wilber accepts these teachings and yet rejects their view of evolution as a degenerative process, we may infer that he considers that he is in a higher stage of rationality than primordial masters (tönpas[c]) such as Shenrab Miwoche and Garab Dorje, and than masters such as Padmasambhava, Jetsun Senge Wangchuk, Longchen Rabjampa and Jigme Lingpa, among other of the greatest Dzogchen Masters of the last 3000 years—and that this has made him able to amend a deviation in the conception of evolution and history that plagued the Dzogchen teachings.

Furthermore, according to the *Rigpa Rangshar Tantra*[d] of the *Upadeshavarga* or Menngagde[e] series of the Dzogchen teachings,[f] it was at the earliest and hence most primal stage of humankind that there manifested the first of the twelve tönpas (tönpa chunyi[g]) or primordial revealers of Dzogchen teachings, the perfect Master Khyeu Nangwa Tampa Samgyi Mikhyappa, who lived at the time when the span of a human lifetime was unlimited (as corresponds to the psychological condition which a tradition associated with the *Kalachakra Tantra* called "Total Space-Time-Awareness",[h] which Zurvanism called

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[a] For Nyingmapa/Dzogchen explanations of the *kalpa* or cosmic cycle in terms of four successive eras or yugas, each more degenerate than the preceding, cf. Dudjom Rinpoche (1991); Kongtrul Lodrö Tayé (1995).

[b] For a Nyingmapa/Dzogchen explanation of the *kalpa* or cosmic cycle in terms of three successive eras or yugas, each more degenerate than the preceding, cf. Padmasambhava (1977).

[c] *ston pa*.

[d] Cited in Namkhai Norbu & Clemente (1999), pp. 22-26 and p. 265, n. 23 (pp. 23-27 and p. 23, n. 13 of the Italian version).

[e] *man ngag sde* or *man ngag gyi sde*.

[f] In the *rnying ma'i rgyud bcu bdun*, vol. I, pp. 389-855, Delhi 1989 (pp. 162 et seq.).

[g] *ston pa bcu gnyis*.

[h] Tarthang Tulku (1977a). Capriles (2000a, 2000b, work in progress 1, work in progress 2, work in progress 3).

Zurvan,[a] and which Shaivism called Mahakala or "total time"[b]), and who, after full Awakening, communicated to his perfect entourage of disciples[59] the *Drataljur Chenpo Gyü*[c] (the fundamental *Tantra* of the *Upadeshavarga* or Menngagde[d] series of Dzogchen teachings and foundation of all teachings), which was transcribed by the divine beings Gajed Wangchuk and Nyima Raptu Nangjed. Thereafter, eleven other tönpas or primordial revealers manifested successfully: the second flourished when the span of a human lifetime was of ten million years (so slow was the subjective experience of time at the period)—and so on, until the time of Buddha Shakyamuni and the supreme Master Garab Dorje, when the span of a lifetime was of one hundred years (Garab Dorje being a manifestation that Shakyamuni emanated in order to transmit the Dzogchen teachings). Each and every time circumstances associated with the passing of time caused a type of teaching to disappear or become incomplete, a new primordial master reintroduced it in the human world.[60] Surely for Wilber this is all mythological, for in terms of his schema the highest teachings leading to full Awakening must have arisen after 500 BCE, and quite likely were improved thereafter through successive generations of Masters, until he himself led them to final perfection by modifying the philosophy of history of the Dzogchen teachings and implying that there were no primordial masters before Shakyamuni.

We have seen that Steven Taylor[e] noted that Wilber's stance concerning primal peoples (just as those of Habermas[f] and Beck & Cowan[g]) have uncomfortable echoes of the Eurocentric colonial mentality, which saw those peoples as inferior or backwards, and which posited European developments as products of higher evolution that demonstrate the superiority of the European peoples. For example, Wilber claims political democracy such as the one that developed in Europe is impossible to primal peoples, despite the fact that nowadays it is well-known that the latter's democracy was truer insofar as it was direct rather than representative, and that US democracy was to a great extent inspired by the Iroquois aborigines; he claims that sexual equality, which has not yet been attained either in Europe or North America, was impossible to primal peoples, even though nowadays it is well-known that sexual inequity has increased with the passing of time, having been exacerbated by Semitic and Indo-European influence. As Sean Kelly[h] points out, to say that the hunter-gatherers of the Paleolithic Era belonged to what Wilber calls the typhonic stage of evolution, and that human beings at this stage were at a pre-personal level of development, was close to suggesting that they were not persons at all, or even that they were nonhuman. Taylor cites Kelly:[i]

> If so, the same would have to be said for the many aboriginal cultures encountered by modern, mental-egoic, 'rational' cultures capable of formal-operational thinking. Giving Wilber's adoption of the principle of ontogenetic recapitulation, this would hold as well for the very young (or mentally challenged, for that matter) who fail to manifest fully differentiated operational thinking.

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[a] Capriles (2000a, 2000b, work in progress 1, work in progress 2, work in progress 3).
[b] Capriles (2000a, 2000b, work in progress 1, work in progress 2, work in progress 3).
[c] *sgra thal 'gyur chen po'i rgyud*, Skt., *shabda maha prasanga mula tantra*.
[d] *man ngag sde or man ngag gyi sde*.
[e] Taylor (2003).
[f] Habermas (1979).
[g] Beck & Cowan (1996).
[h] In Rothberg & Kelly (1996).
[i] Kelly (1996), p. 121, cited in Taylor (2003), p. 62.

However, Wilber is far from claiming that the rights of such people are like the rights of animals (such as guinea pigs). This is evident in what Taylor writes right after the above:[a]

> Similar 'progressivist' views were put forward by early neo-colonial thinkers such as Frazer and Comte, both of whom saw the 'magical' religions of primal peoples as the 'lowest' expression of religion. According to Comte (in Hamilton, 1995) the primitive 'fetishistic' stage is transcended—in sequence—by the polytheistic, monotheistic, metaphysical and positive stages. To Frazer (1959), the magical stage was transcended by the religious and the scientific. Freud's model of phylogenetic development—which he also believed ran parallel with ontogenesis—puts 'the primitive' at the 'narcissism' stage of young children (Freud, 1946).
>
> I am certainly not suggesting that Wilber has a neo-colonial outlook himself, or accusing him—or Habermas or Beck and Cowan—of fascism. Wilber has written that he eulogizes primal tribal societies because they are "literally our roots, our foundations, the basis of all that was to follow... the crucial ground floor upon which so much of history would have to rest" (1996, p. 175). He has also pointed out that, whatever their position on the holoarchy, all holons ultimately have 'Ground Value', since they are all "a radiant manifestation of Spirit, of godhead, of Emptiness" (200b, p. 324). Nevertheless, there is a denigration of primal peoples here which is—I intend to show—unjustified. I believe there is a great deal of evidence suggesting that primal peoples did possess many of the higher characteristics that Wilber believes can only arise at the egoic and post-egoic levels. Or more generally, I believe that in some respects primal tribal cultures reached a higher level of development than modern postindustrial societies. However, above and beyond this, I believe that the primary problem is not a parsimonious view of primal peoples, but the application of ontogenesis to phylogenesis which leads to the parsimonious view. In my opinion, this application is a fallacy, similar to Wilber's pre/trans fallacy, in the sense that a number of superficial similarities prompt one to take the giant leap to complete identification. Primal peoples seem to possess a simple, undivided consciousness and a strong sense of connection to the natural world; they also seem to have less developed powers of rationality and intellect, and a less developed sense of individuality and separateness. But to leap from these similarities to the conclusion that their level of consciousness is exactly that of ontogenetic fulcrum 2 or 3, and that they share exactly the same state of pre-egoic fusion which children experience, is unwarranted. Wilber himself recognizes that the application of ontogenesis to phylogenesis is sometimes unfounded, noting that there are "many places that strict onto/phylo parallels break down" (Wilber, 2000a, p. 146), but in my view the matter is much more problematic than he believes.

When Taylor uses the term "holon," he is using it in Wilber's sense, as referring to the human individual, rather than in the sense given it by Sartre, or in my own modification of this sense. It is important to reiterate that in primal humans a state of Communion, which is nonrelational, alternates with a relational post-Communion state.[61] The words by Chuang Tzu cited in a previous chapter, which set the infant as the paradigm of mental health, fully apply to the Buddhas, and to a great extent to higher bodhisattvas in the Contemplation state and to primal human beings in the state of Communion; therefore, it is clear that there is a partial analogy between all of them. However, as noted in a previous chapter, in our age infants are quite egocentric, they lack the capacity to effectively deal

[a] Taylor (2003), pp. 62-63.

with reality, and they are most prone to be conditioned, whereas Buddhas cannot be conditioned, exhibit no traces of egocentrism, and are incomparably more skillful than self-conscious humans—for their activities being unselfconscious, they are not subject to the self-hindering "centipede effect" inherent in self-consciousness, and yet in them the whole learning achieved in the process of ontogenesis is unconsciously active. In the post-Contemplation state, superior bodhisattvas also incorporate the learning achieved throughout their lifetime, which is much higher than the one achieved by ordinary individuals, and though they are not free from self-hindering, they are subject to it to a lower degree than ordinary human beings. Finally, the state of post-Communion of primal humans is to a great degree analogous to the post-Contemplation state of higher bodhisattvas, in which they again perceive the so-called external world as external, and make differences of all types that could never be made by infants, but in which they are far less affected by the ill-effects of delusion than ordinary human beings of our time, and, as will be shown below, exhibit far greater wisdom than these.[62]

My main disagreement with Taylor lies in the fact that, although he outright rejects Wilber's view of phylogenesis, he accepts and eulogizes Wilber's "spectrum of consciousness" view of ontogenesis. Since this spectrum does not fully apply even to ontogenesis, for, as shown in the preceding chapter, in terms of Buddhism the higher fulcra are altogether mistaken, and yet he relates them to the successive attainments of the Mahayana, the problem is not merely that it is wrong to map this spectrum unto phylogenesis, but mainly that the spectrum itself is defective.

As to whether or not Wilber has a neo-colonial or a fascist outlook, it does not seem that he may be accused of fascism in the literal sense of the term, for he seems to believe in the U.S. model of "democracy," but he certainly seems to have a neo-colonial outlook, for the model of "democracy" in question is limited to chosing between two parties that share the same neo-colonial project, which they express in different ways (and, by the way, that model is designed for excluding other possible parties from elegibility, is designed in such a way as to make policies depend on lobbying by transnationals and other elitistic interest groups, and excludes direct election—not even to mention direct or at least participative democracy). In fact, Wilber's political project lies in seeking a synthesis of the positions of George Bush Jr, Bill Clinton (heads of two US administrations that subsequently refused to sign the Kyoto treatise, among countless other blemishes), Tony Blair (enthussiastic and most inconditional ally of Bush in the project and invasion of Iraq), and Gerhard Schroeder / Angela Merkel.[63] He writes:[a]

> Politics. I have been working with Drexel Sprecher, Lawrence Chickering, Don Beck, Jim Garrison, Jack Crittenden, and several others toward an all-level, all-quadrant political theory (in addition to working with the writings of political theorists too numerous to list). We have been involved with advisors to Bill Clinton, Al Gore, Tony Blair, and George W. Bush, among others. There is a surprisingly strong desire, around the world, to find a "Third Way" that unites the best of liberal and conservative--President Clinton's Vital Center, George W. Bush's Compassionate Conservatism, Germany's Neue Mitte, Tony Blair's Third Way, and Thabo Mbeki's African Renaissance, to name a few—and many theorists are finding an all-level, all-quadrant framework to be the sturdiest foundation for such.
>
> Here is what I consider to be my own particular theoretical orientation, developed largely on my own, which has then become a framework for discussions with these other theorists,

[a] Wilber (2000c).

who bring their own original ideas for a cross-fertilization. I will first indicate my own thoughts, and then the areas where these other theorists have helped me enormously.

In the last chapter of Up from Eden ("Republicans, Democrats, and Mystics"), I made the observation that, when it comes to the cause of human suffering, liberals tend to believe in objective causation, whereas conservatives tend to believe in subjective causation. That is, if an individual is suffering, the typical liberal tends to blame objective social institutions (if you are poor it is because you are oppressed by society), whereas the typical conservative tends to blame subjective factors (if you are poor it is because you are lazy). Thus, the liberal recommends objective social interventions: redistribute the wealth, change social institutions so that they produce fairer outcomes, evenly slice the economic pie, aim for equality among all. The typical conservative recommends that we instill family values, demand that individuals assume more responsibility for themselves, tighten up slack moral standards (often by embracing traditional religious values), encourage a work ethic, reward achievement, and so on.

In other words, the typical liberal believes mostly in Right-Hand causation, the typical conservative believes mostly in Left-Hand causation. (Don't let the terminology of the quadrants confuse you--the political Left believes in Right-Hand causation, the political Right believes in Left-Hand causation; had I been thinking of political theory when I arbitrarily arranged the quadrants, I would probably have aligned them to match).

The important point is that the first step toward a Third Way that integrates the best of liberal and conservative is to recognize that both the interior quadrants and the exterior quadrants are equally real and equally important. We consequently must address both interior factors (values, meaning, morals, the development of consciousness) and exterior factors (economic conditions, material wellbeing, technological advance, social safety net, environment)--in short, a true Third Way would emphasize both interior development and exterior development.

It is significant that Wilber accepts and employs the *newspeak* term “Compassionate Conservatism” as a way of referring to Bush’s policies against the poor in his own country (another example of which is Bush’s vetoing the law granting state medical coverage to poor children in October 207) and against the peoples of the Third World (the latter of which led to the extermination of hundreds of thousands Iraqis[64] and to the horrors of Guantanamo and Abu Ghraib), does not list among the ideologies and positions he tries to synthesize, even moderate, mainstream, relatively environment-friendly positions such as those of the European Green parties (Al Gore writes in favor of ecological conservation, but while he was vice-President to Clinton the US refused to sign the Kyoto treaty, and he is reputed to personally produce much more CO2 than average US citizens). And he does not even mention socialism, Marxism or anarchism. In short, though Wilber cites Fritjhof Schuon approvingly, he seems to be nearer the Theosophic Society than the Traditionalist Movement.

Actually, I think that Wilber is to transpersonal psychology, to Eastern spirituality in the West, and in general to emerging spiritual forces in the West, what State Department propagandist Francis Fukuyama was to political ideology: his views are instrumental in keeping potential dissidents within the ego-camp, capitalist, antiecological establishment. In fact, I believe Wilber’s harsh, unpolite criticism of ecofeminists, feminists in general, deep ecologists and so on may be due to the fact that they threaten the status quo: on the economic plane they are a threat to capitalism; on the social plane they are a threat to all manifestations of stratification; on the political plane they are a threat to the prevailing media-manipulated, lobbying-based pseudo-democracy; etc. At any rate, as the books on

Engaged Buddhism[a] have made it clear and as will be shown in the corresponding **section** of this volume, the Buddhist canonical texts, as well as the writing of the most important Buddhist Masters, whenever they touch upon politics and social and economic organization, express an egalitarian and social oriented perspective, which as Wilber's own words make it patent, the US integral author contradicts. Thus it is clear that, in the name of Buddhism, Wilber contradicts the Buddhist vision of the individual Path of Awakening (cf. the discussion of Wilber in vol. I of this book), turns upside down the Tantric and Dzogchen view of history (as shown in the discussion in the present volume), and runs counter to Buddhist political, economic and social orientations.

"Scientific Evidence" Sustaining the Perennial Philosophy of History and Refutation of the Inversions of Hegel, Marx, Engels, Habermas and Wilber

In order to dispel the prejudices associated with the view of phylogenesis as a process of progressive perfecting led by Europe and its extensions, in different guises and modalities shared by Hegel, Positivist and Neo-Positivist philosophy, Habermas, Beck and Cowan and Ken Wilber, among many others, it seems vital to provide so-called "scientific evidence" of the greater wisdom and more enlightened social characteristics of primal peoples. Thereby I do *not* intend to *demonstrate* what so-called "postmodern" thinkers would call the *degenerative metanarrative* concerning evolution and history, for as will be shown in a subsequent section of this chapter, I do not share the scientist belief that the sciences *prove* hypotheses. All I intend to show is that modern scientism is wrong in assuming that what it views as "scientific evidence" supports the modern *metanarrative of progress*, for the "findings of the sciences" lend far more weight to the *degenerative metanarrative* that I expound in this book than they do to what has been called the modern "myth of eternal progress."[b]

Firstly, it must be noted that, according to the findings of ethnoecology that Philippe Descola reported in an important paper,[c] in the Amazon, where the topsoil is extremely poor, regions that have been inhabited for a longer time exhibit a higher degree of biodiversity than those that have been inhabited for shorter time or that are as yet uninhabited—which seems to show that the intuitive wisdom of the aborigines was such that their interventions on the environment optimized ecological relations. This is the very opposite of what happens with human civilizations, which, as Tom Dale and Vernon Gill Carter have shown,[d] repeatedly destroyed themselves by irrationally preying on their environment, and which, in the case of Western civilization, at some point developed what Gregory Bateson called a "conscious purpose against nature."[e] As Arturo Eichler has noted,[f] in Mexico the ancient Lacandons used to grow 70 different crops in a single acre, whereas those Amazonian aborigines who have not yet been exterminated grow up to 80 varied crops in their small plots, which they never overexploit. They know that many weeds are indexes of the quality of the soil or of some lack; upon restituting the balance of the soil (e.g., by adding a new crop, or increasing one crop and reducing another, etc.), the

[a] Insert data of all newly obtained publications on the subject plus the ones alerady in Bibliography.
[b] Armand (1998).
[c] Descola (1996).
[d] Dale & Carter (1955).
[e] Bateson (1968); also in Bateson (1972).
[f] Eichler (1987), p. 86.

weed disappears. In Peru, a group of anthropologists restored a pre-Columbian system of channels for irrigation and natural fertilization, achieving a yield per acre much higher than the average obtained worldwide with chemical fertilizers. Hence the question is definitely not whether primal peoples or civilized ones are more destructive, but whether or not the former are potentially as destructive as the latter, and the latter's destructiveness is due to the greater population and demographic concentration of civilized social groups—and whether the progression from the primal state to civilization is an automatic consequence of the increase in population, or the product of the development of ego-delusion and in general of a psychological mutation. Regarding the first point, Wilber's view is that primal peoples could not have ecological awareness, for they lacked "formal operational cognition." After citing Sheldrake's[a] remark that the mammoth, the gigant armadillo of South America and the pigmey hippopotamus of Cyprus may have been droven into extinction by overhunting, and quoting Roszak's remarks that some human groups of high antiquity caused ecological disasters,[65] cited abundant evidence of the ecolological awareness of what he calls "primal peoples,"[b][66] Steven Taylor concluded that, "while some unfallen peoples may have lacked foresight in their treatment of the natural world, it seems that many of them *do* manage heir resources a lot more sensibly than we do. However, the Fall is not something that occurred at some point, but a continuous, gradual ongoing process occurring throughout human spiritual and social evolution, and hence the point seems to be that the peoples that caused ecological disasters were already relativel advanced in the process of degenerative spiritual evolution. At any rate, Taylor explicitly rejects Wilber's view as follows:[c]

> ...I dispute Wilber's view that primal peoples were potentially—apart from their lack of technology—as environmentally destructive as we are... [together with his view—as expressed in (1995), for example] that ecological awareness can only arise with formal operational cognition, when we become capable of grasping mutual interrelationships. But surely there is another kind of ecological awareness which is nonrelational, and which stems from the sense of empathic connection with the natural world—in other words, from direct perceptual awareness of a shared sense of being, rather than from rationality.

I wonder how would Wilber explain the reactions of American aborigines' to the European invaders' attitude to the rest of the ecosphere.[67] At any rate, it is important to note that Taylor's remarks in this regard fit into the model of the degenerative evolution of humankind we have been discussing, according to which the earliest stage of humankind is one in which a nonrelational state of Communion alternates with a state that is relational but in which relations are communicative, and later on the capacity for Communion diminishes, so that the nonrelational state becomes rare and in the relational state instrumental relations come to prevail.

Concerning ethics and morality, it is clear that humans in what I call the pre-ethical period exhibited virtues that are absent in humans of the ethical period, who exhibit the vices that constitute the opposites of those virtues. As Martine Lochouarn stated in an important paper,[d] on the basis of the study of a very large quantity of European and North-

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[a] Sheldrake (1991).
[b] Taylor (2003), ch. 14, section Primal Ecolological Awareness *et seq*., pp. 120 *et seq*.
[c] Taylor (2003), p. 68.
[d] Lochouarn (1993).

African human fossils from the Paleolithic and the Neolithic, paleopathology has established that in those eras human beings did not die from traumatisms caused by other human beings, and that, on the contrary, whenever possible wounds and traumatisms caused by the attack of animals or by accidents were cured with the help of other individuals—whereas, in our time, many thousands of human beings die everyday from the violence exerted by other human beings in wars, ethnic conflicts and common crime. (Paleopathology has also discovered other surprising facts; according to Time & Life's *The Library of Curious & Unusual Facts*, in Europe brain surgery was performed many thousands of years ago, and 80% of patients survived.) The cultures of hunter-gatherers, horticulturalists and so on that anthropologists have been able to observe in the last few centuries are far distant from the truly primal societies of the Paleolithic and even from those of the early Neolithic, and yet researchers have found them to be highly unwarlike. In the words of Steven Taylor:[a]

> The great majority of primal cultures are also strikingly unwarlike. Lenski (1978) notes, for example, that for hunter-gatherers "the incidence of violence is strikingly low ... Warfare is uncommon and violence between members of the same group is infrequent" (p. 422). This was also true during the early to middle Neolithic period of history, when simple horticultural societies developed. As Lenski notes, "there is little evidence of warfare during the early Neolithic. Graves rarely contain weapons and most communities had no walls or other defenses ... Later in the Neolithic the picture changed drastically and warfare became increasingly common" (pp. 148-149). The idea that 'war is as old as humanity' is now disputed by the majority of archeologists and anthropologists. In *The Origin of War* (1995), for example, J. M. G. van der Dennen surveys over 500 primal peoples, the vast majority of which he finds to be "highly unwar-like," with a small proportion who have mild, low-level, or ritualized warfare. Similarly, R. Brian Ferguson (2000) has stated that "the global pattern of actual evidence indicates that war as a regular pattern is a relatively recent development in human history, emerging as our ancestors left the simple, mobile hunter-gatherer phase" (p. 160)
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> In other words, when we look back at history we do not see a gradual ascent to present day Western democracy, equality and (relative) nonmilitarism. First of all, we see an earlier time when these qualities were already present. The ancient hunter-gatherers and simple horticulturalists clearly possessed 'enlightened' social characteristics which should only, according to Wilber, manifest themselves at the formal-operational level. Beck and Cowan's view that from 50,000 to 10,000 years ago—when the 'red meme' was dominant—human beings were extremely self-assertive, battling with one another for status and demanding attention and respect, does not hold true. These authors appear to fall for the pernicious—and totally unjustified—myth of prehistoric cave-dwelling 'savages' whose lives were a harsh and bleak struggle for survival, and who constantly fought over food and women and used any excuse to bash each other over the head with cubs. Again, there are hints of a kind of neo-colonialism at work, with a very Victorian—and very false—view of human history as a slow progression from primitive chaos and ignorance to increased enlightenment and order.
>
> After this early more 'idyllic' phase, we see an apparent 'Fall' into war, patriarchy, and social stratification (as well as greater egocentrism). And later still—during recent centuries—we see a gradual re-emergence of these 'higher' social characteristics. [In fact,] according to Wilber, enlightened social characteristics such as nonmilitarism, democracy, and equality can occur when societies as a whole move to the formal-operational level. This

[a] Taylor (2003), pp. 70-72.

is happening at the present time, and has been since the beginning of the ‘high ego’ or egoic-rational phase at around 500 BCE. This phase reached its fruition in the sixteenth century, with the rise of the modern state, and gradually began to manifest itself in the ‘Enlightenment’ principles of equality and democracy. It led to the end of slavery, the end of autocratic monarchies, women’s rights, workers’ rights, a decline in militarism, and the like (Wilber, 1995).

It is true that as a result of the later “developments of rationality” in human evolution the need to assuage injustices arises, as shown by the rise of the idea of human rights and the ideals of democracy, socialism, sexual equality, etc.; however, implementation of the idea and ideals in question has not been greatly successful: the injustices rationality attempts to assuage stem from the development of instrumental, vertical relations in all fields, and all attempts individuals possessed by these relations make to put an end to the injustices that stem from the relations in question assert and conserve the relations at their root, thus failing to put an end to them: slavery was abolished, but presently it proliferates throughout the world in new (illegal) modalities; the equality of the sexes was established, but women are fax from upholding the same positions as men, while domestic and sexist violence is rampant; the idea of human rights and the ideals of democracy and socialism have become widespread, but to a large extent they have done so only formally or nominally, for secondary process cannot implant and enforce ideals that contradict prevailing primary process relations, and so democracy has become an empty shell of formalities and rituals, while socialism failed to be implemented in those countries that supposedly adopted it (as Castoriadis has noted, what the ex-Soviet Union and its satellites implemented was a bureaucratic distortion of State capitalism) and then its ideals were abandoned in favor of the neo-liberal exacerbation of selfishness and exploitation (in the term “neo-liberal,” “liberal” has the Smithian sense of “free competition,” rather than that of “non-conservative,” which is the one the term is usually given in US politics[68]). Likewise, Lewis Mumford was right in insisting that modern life as a whole, although providing possibilities for broader expression and development, simultaneously subverts those possibilities.[a] The point is that, as shown in a previous chapter, the attempt to implant and enforce ideals instrumentally reinforces the instrumentality—and hence the manifold evils derived from instrumentality—that they are intended to contain. This is why Lao Tzu wrote the already quoted verse:[b69]

When the *tao* is lost, we still have its virtue;[70]
when its virtue is lost, we have humane attitudes;
having lost humanity, we develop righteousness;
having lost righteousness, [only] propriety and ritual remain.

In the state of Communion corresponding to full Awakening, to the state of Contemplation of bodhisattvas, and to the state of Communion in which primal human beings realized the common nature of them all and of the whole universe, there being no ego-delusion and no Jungian shadow, there is neither egotism nor evil impulses to contain; since there is no delusory valuation of thought and therefore no subject-object duality, one does not live on the basis of an illusory “particular intellect” that should decide the course

[a] Among other works, Mumford (1967/1970).
[b] Adapted from various translations.

to follow by taking learned values as a guide, but on the basis of the *Logos* or *tao*,[71] which manifests in a condition of total plenitude and in a spontaneous flow of unselfish activity that equally benefits self and others. Only when the *Logos* or *tao* has been lost, does arise the idea of "value," and do spring forth the series of values/molds to which human beings should adapt in order to avoid acting against the common good. This occurs at a certain stage of the process of degenerative evolution, in human beings in the post-Communion state; however, since these beings—just like superior bodhisattvas in the post-Contemplation state—have not developed the ego-delusion to a significant degree, since they possess an underlying awareness of the fact that all beings share a common nature or essence that is divine and that as such should be respected,[72] and since they have some awareness of the apparitional character of all reality, the need for them to curb wayward impulses by means of morality, social pressure or law is not so great. Furthermore, their need to curb instrumental, selfish, evil impulses is smaller than in superior bodhisattvas in post-Contemplation, for the latter from very early age developed instrumentality and selfishness, which will have to be gradually neutralized until the tenth *bodhisattva* level, but human beings in relatively early stages of degenerative evolution have not yet developed instrumentality or a high degree of selfishness.

We have seen that the findings of paleopathology strongly suggest that in the Paleolithic and even up to some point in the Neolithic there were no wars between groups or violent conflicts between members of the same group. Likewise, as will be shown below, there was no vertical structure of power and therefore there was a truer democracy than the ones we pride ourselves on having today, for it was *de facto* rather than nominal, and it was "direct" rather than representative; production and distribution of goods was *de facto* based on communist principles; and there was a great degree of equality between men and women. According to Wilber, since primal peoples have only reached fulcrum-2 or early 3, they should be warlike, socially stratified, and sexist (and though Wilber acknowledges that patriarchal characteristics are not apparent in these societies,[a] he attributes this fact to the greater economic importance of the labor of women). Though all peoples have undergone the process of continuous "Fall" that we are considering, going beyond what I call the "pre-ethical stage," not all of them have proceeded in the same direction as those that developed urbane civilizations (or, even less so, as European civilization in particular), for some have conserved their tribal structure and function. Steven Taylor writes with regard to these peoples:"[b73]

> The quality of compassion is so central to Aboriginal culture that mothers take care to "teach" it to their children. Often, when a child grabs some food or another object and holds it to its mouth, the mother—or another female relative—pretends to be in need of it, [in order] to encourage a spirit of sharing. Similarly, whenever a weak or ill person or animal comes by, the mother makes a point of expressing sympathy for it, and offering it food (Lawlor, 1991). As Lawlor notes, by these means "the child experiences a world in which compassion and pity are dramatically directed towards the temporarily less fortunate. The constant maternal dramatization of compassion in the early years orients a child's emotions toward empathy, support, warmth and generosity" (p. 247)...
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> In terms of Kohlberg's hierarchy of moral development, primal peoples should—according to Wilber—only have a pre-conventional morality, with their sole moral

[a] Wilber (1995).
[b] Taylor (2003), pp. 68 & 70.

> motivation the completely egocentric goal of avoiding punishment and gaining rewards. But they clearly have a much higher level of morality than this. As Magesa (1997) indicates above, the main motivation of their morality is not personal or even communal, but universal: to preserve the harmony of the universe. This clearly suggests that, at least in some respects, they possess a post-conventional morality.

Above we saw that in the state of Communion in which they did not feel separate from the universe and the other beings in it, primal peoples of the pre-ethical period spontaneously took care of the universe as their own body; insofar as they lived in and by the *tao*, they did not need righteousness, or even goodness or compassion to be instilled in them. As a result of realization of the divine in other human beings and in the rest of nature in the state of Communion, in the post-Communion state empathy, goodness and compassion manifested in a natural way; though the ego-delusion arose in this state, it was quite mild, and therefore egotism and the rest of the ill effects of this delusion were equally mild. When our gradual Fall gave rise to tendencies that needed to be curbed, so that tribal peoples had to generate a post-conventional morality, this morality was far loftier than that of modern humans, for rather than being personal or even communal, it was aimed at preserving the harmony of the cosmos. Since hunter-gatherers and early horticulturalists of our time have a post-conventional morality of this kind, they must be regarded as being ethically higher than civilized peoples.

In the preceding chapter, the schema of higher fulcra in Wilber's spectrum of consciousness was shown to be mistaken insofar as he intends it to be a universal map of evolution in all Paths of Awakening, including Dzogchen and other Buddhist Paths, but it does not fit any Buddhist Path and probably does not fit any existing Path of Awakening. Therefore the problem with Wilber's theories does not lie solely in the fact that he applies to phylogenesis his model of ontogenesis. And yet the lower fulcra in our author's spectrum, which are the levels that manifest successively in the lower stages of ontogenesis, do not seem to be wide off the mark—so long as they are limited to modern, degenerated societies, and are not extrapolated to phylogenesis:[a]

> Following Piaget, Wilber suggests that before they reach the operational stage, children are extremely egocentric. Experiments such as Piaget's famous "Swiss mountain scene" (Piaget & Inhelder, 1956), purported to demonstrate that children are unable to see the world from other people's perspective. As a result, they are—according to Piaget and Wilber—incapable of empathy and compassion, since these depend on looking at the world from the perspective of others, and 'feeling with' them.
>
> If primal peoples have only reached Wilber's fulcrum-2, corresponding to Piaget's preoperational stage, we would expect them to be similarly egocentric. But the reality could hardly be more different. In fact, primal peoples are characterized by a pronounced lack of egocentrism. They generally display a strong sense of empathy and compassion for other living beings, and for nature in general. The fact that hunter-gatherers obtain 10 to 20 percent of their food through hunting may seem to contradict this, but most primal peoples approach hunting with great respect and compassion for their prey. Hunting is often seen as an unfortunate necessity, and the act of killing is never performed with pleasure. Turnbull (1993) described how, to the Mbuti of Africa, hunting is the 'original sin', which occurred when a mythical ancestor killed an antelope and then ate it to conceal his act. Since then, all animals—including human beings—have been condemned to die. Partly because of this

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[a] Taylor (2003), pp. 67-70.

philosophy, they are "gentle hunters" who never show "any expression of joy, nor even of pleasure" (p. 7) when they make a catch. They never kill more than they need for one day, since "to kill more than is absolutely necessary would be to heighten the consequences of that original sin and confirm even more firmly their mortality" (Turnbull, 1993, p. 7). Similarly, Rudgley (1998) compares traditional hunters to modern fox or game hunters and concludes the former are characterized by "a great degree of respect for their quarry and even a pang of regret at having to kill animals at all." There are, he states, "numerous cases of empathy and even reverence for animals among the hunting peoples of northern Canada and elsewhere" (p. 113)...

Egocentrism gives rise to a whole host of negative human traits. The individual is dominated by his or her own needs and desires, and refuses to let the needs of other individuals or of the community as a whole come before them. After all, since he cannot "put himself in other people's shoes," he cannot understand, or even be aware of, the needs and desires of others. This leads to behavior that we associate with greed and selfishness. And according to Piaget and Wilber, for children below the age of 7—at the pre-operational level—this selfishness is inevitable. Children [in modern societies] are extremely reluctant to share, and so might eat a whole bag of sweets instead of offering them to their siblings, or throw away toys they are bored with, without thinking that another child may like them.

But we do not find any behavior resembling this amongst primal peoples. In fact, again, we find the complete opposite: a powerful spirit of reciprocity and sharing, and ethical systems which negate any expression of greed. One of the fundamental cultural differences that made Native Americans unable to adapt to the European way of life was that, whereas Europeans became successful and respected as a result of accumulating wealth for themselves, the Indians gained kudos by distributing wealth... The same is true of traditional African culture, where to hoard any wealth for oneself, and so to deprive the other members of the community, is regarded as a heinous sin...

Primal peoples are clearly not, then, egocentric to anything like the degree that children at fulcrums 2 or 3 are. They clearly can take the role of the other—or perhaps more strictly, their less strong sense of ego means that they experience a shared sense of being with other holons. Perhaps we are dealing with two different kinds of empathy here, corresponding to the two different kinds of ecological awareness I mentioned earlier. There is a typically 'Eurocentric' empathy, which is the result of heightened rationality, and comes from taking the perspective of the other. And there is a typically—more powerful—'primal' kind of empathy, which does not come from role-taking, but from actually sharing identity with the other, and actually experiencing its state of being and its suffering or joy... Again, this suggests that Wilber's ontogenetic model cannot be applied to phylogenesis...

Another conundrum to which the above analysis gives rise is the apparent fact that we Europeans are more egocentric than primal peoples. This is evident from a number of factors: our much more pronounced desire for status and power and material goods (i.e., greed), the extreme competitiveness of our culture, the emphasis on the individual over the community, social stratification and—perhaps more emphatically—our lack of empathy with the natural world, our inability to 'feel with' nature. According to Wilber's analysis—and those of Habermas and Beck and Cowan—as evolution progresses there should be a decline in egocentrism. And again, in ontogenetic development this is indisputably the case. But equally indisputably, in terms of the development of our species this is not the case. Lenski (1978) has also noted that, rather than showing a forward movement away from savagery and toward greater democracy and humanity, our cultural evolution actually shows a regression in this regard. As he states, "as numerous scholars have noted, it is one of the great ironies of evolution that progress in technology and social structure is often linked with ethical regress" (p. 176). He noted that the evolution from hunter-gatherer to horticultural and then agrarian societies is marked by "the decline in the practice of sharing

> and the growing acceptance of economic and other kinds of inequality" (Lenski, 1978, p. 176).
>
> I am not trying to turn the tables completely though, by suggesting that our egocentrism is the same as young children's. We may say that there are two different kinds of egocentrism: a pre-egoic level and a post-egoic one...

The term "pre-egoic egocentrism" is not an oxymoron, for in the term "pre-egoic" the noun "ego" is to be understood in Freudian and similar terms to refer to a developed ego-functioning, whereas in "egocentrism" "ego" is the Latin translation of the pronoun "I." The tropisms that result in the development of ego-delusion (i.e., in taking oneself to be a self-existing self and feeling one is the most important entity in the universe) gain in power as degenerative evolution goes on, but also the values of society come to be based to a greater extent on ego-delusion as degenerative evolution proceeds; therefore, egocentrism increases with degenerative evolution both at the "pre-egoic" and the "post-egoic" levels: not only children, but also adults, are far more egocentric in our societies than in the tribal communities of our time—which in their turn must be assumed to be more egocentric than true primal peoples. Furthermore, if adults of our time seem to be less egocentric than children, this is due to the fact that social conventions demand that adults repress (or at least conceal) their egocentrism, which is so extreme that we have destroyed the planet and subject fellow human beings to extremely harsh sufferings and humiliations in order to satisfy our most immediate cravings.

What can be said of evolution in the plane of art? Those who have carried out a thorough study of the art of the Paleolithic consider that it is not legitimate to speak of an artistic evolution—in the sense of "perfecting"—of humankind. Andreas Lommel, head of the Ethnological Museum in Zurich, writes with regard to the art of the period:[a]

> There are some who would rather avoid any speculation [with regard to the spiritual development of those who created the wondrous Franco-Cantabrian primitive art], for the problem poses unsolvable questions to the student of prehistory and especially to anyone naïvely convinced of the march of progress. If 'primitive man' was able to produce such wonderful works of art with his rough stone and bone instruments, he could not have been in any sense 'primitive' in the artistic and intellectual sense, and, contrariwise, must have reached an as yet unsurpassed level of development. This demonstrates that mental and artistic evolution does not develop side by side with the progress of material civilization. To accept this hypothesis would amount to revolutionizing the picture of human development as we see it that is, as a more or less linear progression.

On the plane of religion, the vision of human beings was non-substantialistic and nondual; it was of the type that Dumézil called "magic," which experienced all things as manifestations of a single, sacred principle—which was in the world rather than beyond the world, and that was not the patrimony of gods believed to be above humans. Therefore, rather than being worshiped outside and above the world, the divine had to be celebrated in the world, by means of Communion in the unconcealment of the single, true condition of all entities. Since the sacred was not placed higher up in the form of ruling divinities, and human beings were not placed lower down as subjects of the divinities, in the religious plane there were no vertical relations (i.e., relations of dominion) that later on could extend

[a] Lommel (undated).

themselves to other planes. And, in spite of the process of degeneration that has followed, still in our days tribal peoples conserve this awareness of the divine as manifesting in the world in the form of a universal animating force of principle. Steven Taylor tells us:[a]

> [Tribal peoples are aware of the existence of] an animating force which pervades all things. The Iroquois [of North America] called this *Orenda*, to the Hopi [of North America] it was *Maasauu*, the Nuer of Africa call it *Kwoth*, the Ufaina of the Amazon call it *Fufaka*, Melanesian peoples refer to it as *Mana*, and so on. Every primal culture without exception has a name for this force. The word of the Plains Indians used for 'Great Spirit', *Wakataka*, literally means 'the force which moves all things'. Here a member of the Pawnee tribe describes their 'supreme God':
>
> "We do not think of *Tirawa* as a person. We think of *Tirawa* as [a power which is] in everything and ... moves upon the darkness, the night, and causes her to bring forth the dawn. It is the breath of the new-born dawn (Eliade, 1967, p. 13)."
>
> In my view this force is clearly one and the same as brahman or consciousness-force... The passage above invites comparison with any of the passages from the Upanishads which describe the presence of brahman within the manifest world. For example,
>
> "Shining, yet hidden, Spirit lives in the cavern. Everything that sways, breathes, opens, closes, lives in Spirit... Spirit is everywhere, upon the right, upon the left, above, below, behind, in front. What is the world but Spirit (in Happold, 1963, p. 146)."
>
> The attempts anthropologists have made to translate primal peoples' terms for 'consciousness-force' make this connection clearer. The German anthropologist F. Speiser (speaking of the natives of the New Hebrides) used the term *Lebenskraft* (lifepower); Dr. Pechuel-Loesche (speaking of the Loango of Africa) called it *Potenz*, while another German anthropologist, R. Neuhaus (speaking of the natives of New Guinea) used the term *Seelenstoff* (soulstuff) (Lévy-Bruhl, 1965). Perhaps clearest of all, though, is this description by the British anthropologist J. H. Holmes of what the natives of the Purari Delta in New Guinea called *Imunu*. Holmes translates this as 'soul' or 'living principle', and writes:
>
> "[*Imunu*] was associated with everything, nothing arrived apart from it ...nothing animate or inanimate could exist apart from it. It was the soul of things ... It was intangible, but like air, wind, it could manifest its presence. It permeated everything that made up life to the people of the Purari Delta ... [It was] that which enables everything to exist as we know it, and distinct from other things which, too, exist by it (in Lévy-Bruhl, 1965, p. 17)."
>
> In other words, consciousness-force doesn't just pervade all reality, it is the *source* of all reality—which is exactly what the *Upanishads* (and the world's other mystical traditions) tell us of brahman...
>
> As Evans-Pritchard (1967) notes of the Nuer, "Spirit-force is not a particular air-spirit but the [air-]spirit is a figure of Spirit-force ... The spirits are not each other but they are Spirit-force in different figures (pp. 51-52)..."[b]
>
> ...There seems to be a general recognition that the individual human spirit is in essence divine too, as a part of the great ocean of Spirit which pervades the whole world. In fact, since all natural things are seen as divine in essence, it would be very surprising if this were not the case. As the anthropologist H. Sindima writes of traditional African peoples, for example, "All life—that of people, plants and animals, and the earth—originates and therefore shares an intimate relationship of bonded ness with divine life; all life is divine life (1990, p. 144)..."

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[a] Taylor (2003), pp. 64-66.

[b] The original had "God," which in agreement with Taylor's interpretation and following his terminology I replaced by "Spirit-force."

This incidentally works against Wilber's claim that when individuals at lower levels have peak experiences, the experience will be colored by and interpreted in terms of their level of development. When individuals at the magic stage experience the transpersonal, they will, he claims, suffer from massive ego-inflation, and believe that only they are one with God. This is inevitable since they "cannot take the role of the other and thus realize that all the people—in fact, all sentient beings—are equally one with God (Wilber, 2000a, p. 15)." But primal peoples' recognition that 'all life is divine life' strongly suggests that this does not apply to their experience...

As will be shown below, Wilber could contend that this is the expression of a state like that of a child in the oceanic feeling, but this is not so, because children in the oceanic feeling do not and cannot commune in the realization of the sacred universal force that pervades and moves all things, and they lack a post-Communion state in which they may celebrate this force.[74] According to Wilber's spectrum of consciousness, which I contested in the preceding chapter, it is at fulcrum 7, which is what he calls the psychic level, that we experience nature as divine, but in Wilber's view this level is barred to primal peoples, except—he finally accepted in 2000a—in the case of a few exceptional individuals.

With the passing of time, the relational state of post-Communion developed into what the Bible represented as eating the "fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil," which consolidated judgment—a term that in German is *Urteil*, the etymology of which is "original / originating partition." In fact, we have seen that the condition for judging is that there be an illusory mental subject appearing to be separate from its object, that the sensory continuum be split by human perception into figure and ground, and that the figure be deemed to be like this or like that (which, in the case of moral or aesthetic judgments, modifies the individual's feeling-tone, causing it to become pleasant, unpleasant or neutral). With the passing of time, the partition in question became ever more firmly rooted, and so we carne to feel separate from the plenitude of the Self-*qua*-Base most of the time, while the unconcealment of the sacred, of the whole, of the all-powerful, became ever more rare. Finally, in most of us the natural capacity to experience *aletheia* and Communion was blocked, and thus we had to project the sacred, the whole and the all-powerful unto a beyond, giving rise to the gods and the heaven they inhabit. This degenerative evolution, particularly as manifested in the plane of religion, was reflected in the evolution of art. Jacques Cauvin has noted:[a]

Though it is known that religious feeling has accompanied the human species for a long time, it is not easy to date the appearance of the first gods. Paleolithic art already had a 'religious' content, but it seems not to have had reference to gods. The notion of a divinity manifests itself for the first time in the Near East in the form of female terracotta statuettes, at the very beginning of the 'Neolithic revolution'—a very important moment in the history of humankind. Preceding by a short time the first agricultural experiments, this psychological mutation could partly explain the formidable transformation of the Neolithic.

Cauvin stresses the fact that the predominantly "animalistic" or zoomorphic Franco-Cantabrian art of the Paleolithic and the artistic manifestations of the same type and period in the Near East had a non-theistic, naturalistic religious content reminiscent of the Chinese *yin-yang*, and expressed a vision of the universe that excluded vertical relations:

[a] Cauvin (1987); cf. also Cauvin (1998/2000).

nothing was posited beyond the world and above human beings that the latter should worship. The psychological transformation represented by the "birth of the gods" (the first two being a female mother figure and a bull-headed god) had not yet taken place; it was to take place in the Near East right before the beginning of the Neolithic, giving rise to art forms placing human beings vertically below the gods, in an adoring and supplicant attitude. Cauvin says of this transformation:[a]

> At this point, (the transformation of) art seems to reflect an event of psychological character. The sacred is no longer on the level of man, but 'over' him. This translates itself into the belief in a supreme entity, which may have human or animal form, whereas, from then on, humankind is below and turns toward it through the effort of praying, expressed by the arms extended toward the sky...
>
> Not only is then the Goddess the first supreme power in human form—that is, the origin and supremacy of the natural world is conceived by man, for the first time, 'in his image and likeness', including the psychic power expressed by the 'gaze' of the statuettes—but the divine plane is that on which the opposites unite and tensions are resolved.

In Biblical terms, the above may be said to have completed the "expulsion from Eden," which progressively extended itself through Eurasia and North Africa, and then through a great deal of the world, as "neolithization" spread. As we have seen, in the earliest stage of humankind the nonrelational state of Communion in which the single, divine essence of all essents was realized, alternated with a relational state of post-Communion, in which relations were communicative insofar as there was a residual awareness that all essents were ultimately divine.[75] However, later on the capacity for Communion diminished, so that the nonrelational state became rarer and the relational state came to prevail, in which, due to the loss of the capacity of Communion, to the ensuing inability to recognize the divine in other human beings and in the rest of nature, and to the origination and development of the vertical relationship expressed in the mutation in art that Cauvin described in the above passage, human society and the human psyche structured itself in terms of vertical relations—which manifested in the arising, after a very short time, of political power and social and economic differences. Parallel to this, the ego delusion continued to develop, causing the erroneous experience of ourselves as inherently separate, limited selves or egos to gradually gain in power, and therefore giving rise to ever-increasing selfishness / egotism. With the passing of time, the combination of selfishness, verticality and our incapacity to perceive the divine in nature and other human beings and to put ourselves in their place led vertical relations to acquire an instrumental character, initially resulting in the exertion of violence against other sentient beings that gave rise to the Jungian shadow (as shown above, the Mbuti of Africa view as the "original sin" the killing of an antelope by a mythical ancestor, who then ate its meat in order to conceal his act—the consequence of which was that henceforth all sentient beings sooner or later had to meet death). The gradual development of the shadow, as shown in a previous chapter, impelled the development of evil, which in its turn was catalyzed by the division of humankind into shepherding and agricultural peoples, which the *Book of Genesis* represented (though inverting their roles) in terms of the myth of Cain and Abel and the former's aggression toward the latter—which, with the passing of time, translated itself

[a] Cauvin (1987); cf. also Cauvin (1998/2000).

into the conquest and domination of the agriculturalists by the shepherds.[76] This further impelled the development of the shadow, modifying the character of the vertical relations that had developed at that point in such a way that they turned into relations of aggression, oppression and exploitation—and thus setting the bases for the project of subduing and exploiting other human beings, as well as what we had come to perceive as an external environment. Therefore it is paradoxical, to say the least, that Wilber[a] viewed the development of polytheistic and monotheistic religions as a surpassing of the "magical" religion of primal peoples and as progressive steps towards realization of the divine.

In the period when Communion was generalized and, in the post-Communion state, communicative relations prevailed, these relations predominated in all fields, and so we may refer to this stage as being pan-communicative. It was because the primary process relations of primal peoples were communicative rather than instrumental, that they did not exert violence against other human beings and that they were so gentle and collaborative in their relations with others. It was for exactly the same reason—which caused them to view the river, the tree and so on as phenomena having an I like ours and being a manifestation of the divine, and as such deserving respect—and because of their acute awareness of interdependences, that they were able to improve biodiversity. When, at a later stage, instrumental relations replaced communicative ones, they also came to prevail in all fields, for, as we have seen, relations are established in primary process, in which it is impossible to establish who is who in the relationship in order to apply some relations to some fields and other relations to other fields, and in which, since it does not involve negatives, it is impossible to decide, "these relations will not be applied to that field" (which is one of the reasons why above I rejected Habermas' view that relationships with the natural environment should be instrumental, whereas relationships with other human beings should be communicative—as well as Engels' idea that "in communism, rather than dominating human beings, we would dominate nature and inanimate things").

Wilber's spectrum of consciousness and the hierarchies he names "holoarchies," reproduce the vertical structure issuing from the psychical mutation that, as Cauvin has shown, was reflected in art as the "birth of the gods." Within Buddhism, the gradual *Sutrayana* responds to this vertical structure when it posits five paths and eleven levels, each being somehow "higher" than the former; however, as shown in the preceding chapter, this is an expedient devise which arises from the nonrelational state of absolute equality of the Buddhas, in response to the vertical mentality of potential disciples, and which is balanced by the explanation of delusion as resulting from conditioning and the presentation of the Path as a process of discovery of the unconditioned and of undoing of conditioning (as illustrated in *Theravada* Buddhism by the *Atthasalini*'s image of demolition of whatever is built). The same cannot be said of the spiritual systems invented on the basis of its own delusion by the deluded mind that is structured in terms of vertical, instrumental relationships, for the ensuing hierarchical systems are taken to accurately reflect the structure of the Path and of reality in general, and in general are conceived in (subtler or coarser) substantialistic terms. Furthermore, it is frequent that in such cases this vertical, instrumental structure be associated with a moral dualism (the soul is good or pure, the body evil or impure) and a subtler or coarser anti-ecological antisomatism, as occurs in the systems of the Orphics and their philosophical heirs (Pythagoras and the Pythagoreans, Parmenides and the Eleatics, Plato and the Platonists), as well as in those of

[a] Wilber (1981).

the Manicheans and some other Gnostics[77]—and, to a greater or lesser extent, in the *Old Testament* and in many Christian ideologies, in some Brahmanic systems based on renunciation,[78] and in quite a few Western systems of philosophy influenced by Christianity or Platonism).

Although the degenerative view of evolution presents the "Fall" as an ongoing process that takes place throughout the whole of the cosmic cycle, it is clear that when understood, on the basis of a literal interpretation of the *Book of Genesis*, as a *moment* marking the end of the Primordial Age, the Fall roughly corresponds to the arising of the mother goddess and the bull-headed god that Cauvin referred to in the paper quoted above, and the "punishment" of human beings took effect when their daily lives ceased being mainly playful and toil became predominant—which occurred as hunting, fishing and recollection were replaced by agriculture and animal breeding, which implied the need to work for many hours every day, "earning one's bread with the sweat of one's forehead." This came to pass after most human beings lost the ability to commune in the direct, nonconceptual realization of the physical plane as sacred and paradisal, and therefore dualistic delusion and the ensuing conflict could no longer be resolved by the unveiling of the common nature of opposites and the consequent spontaneous liberation of tensions in what I have been calling Communion—as a result of which the physical plane became that of duality and of the conflict of opposites, and human beings had to invent a "beyond" into which they could project the sacred, fancying it as a Paradise, blissful and free of conflict. (This shows that Washburn's discussion of the myth of the genesis of "original sin" misses the point.[a]) Furthermore, since human beings could no longer resolve their conflicts spontaneously as they arose, they had to place their hopes in the help of gods. Steven Taylor tells us with regard to tribal peoples of our time:[b]

> It's true that, apart from a few exceptions, early human beings and primal peoples like the (Australian) Aborigines and Native Americans had only rudimentary engineering and building skills, rudimentary medical science, and no written language. However, to see Aborigines and Native Americans as 'backward' because of their lack of technology ignores the fact that most primal peoples were so well adapted to their environments that they did not actually need technology. The lives of hunter-gatherer tribes were actually much easier than those of the horticulturalists and agriculturalists who came after them—even easier, in some respects, than our lives. Far from exhausting themselves in their search for food, hunter-gatherers actually spent only 12 to 20 hours per week searching for it (Rudgley, 1993; Sahlins, 1972). The diet of hunter-gatherers was also extremely healthy. Apart from the small amount of meat they ate (10%-20% of their diet) their diet was practically identical to that of a modern-day vegan, with no dairy products and a wide variety of fruits, vegetables, roots, and nuts, all eaten raw (which nutrition experts tell us is the healthiest way to eat). This partly explains why most of the skeletons of ancient hunter-gatherers that have been discovered have been surprisingly large and robust, and show few signs of degenerative diseases and tooth decay (Rudgley, 1998)

As to whether it was demographic pressure or psychological mutation that led human beings on the path of civilization, according to Cauvin the constant toil that agriculture requires was not at all necessary from the standpoint of resources, and therefore

[a] Washburn (1995, ch. 2, The Body Ego, Conclusion. Spanish Ed. pp. 115-117).
[b] Taylor (2003), pp. 63-64.

must have resulted from a spiritual mutation of humankind. In fact, Cauvin rejects the theories of American researchers Lewis R. Binford and Kent V. Flannery that attribute to ecological reasons—namely, to the reduction of the quantity of game, fish and wild vegetables for recollection—the need to switch to a mode of life based on agriculture, for his own research allegedly demonstrated that in the Near East, at the time farming appeared, there was abundant game, fish and wild vegetables, and so there was no "ecological" need to give up the way of life of hunters-fishermen-gatherers and develop farming, which demanded many hours of daily toil—instead of the two or three hours that, in favorable climates, were necessary for hunting, fishing and gathering—and which laid a heavy full-time responsibility on the shoulders of individuals.[79] At any rate, the seeds of the process of degeneration began sprouting in the Age of Perfection (*krityayuga*), Age of Truth (*satyayuga*) or Golden Age, and degenerative evolution has been but the process of the plant reaching full maturity: neither idealist nor economist-materialist views of human evolution can fully explain this process, for the structure and function of the human mind is inseparable from the social relations in which individuals develop, being molded by them as much as it molds them.

The fact that primal peoples did not have to toil for their sustenance is reflected in the philosophy of the Stoics, who asserted that in the Golden Age nature bestowed its fruits to human beings without them having to toil; in the Silver Age and the Copper Age, a progressively greater effort was needed in order to obtain the fruits of the earth; and finally, in the Iron Age, the greatest toil is necessary for obtaining them. The Stoics also made it clear that in the Golden Age there were no divisions between human beings: the *Logos* ruled, and therefore human beings were all free and equal among themselves and were not divided by national boarders or by distinctions of social class, wealth or ancestry. Private property was unknown, as were also the individual family, slavery and servitude, or the State in which a few prevail over the majority. The goods of nature were enjoyed in common by all human beings, who lacked any sense of possessiveness and lived like true brothers and sisters, abandoned to the natural flow of the *Logos*—and therefore free from any kind of government or control. Thus it is clear that the way the original, pre-Indo-European traditions that shared the degenerative vision of human evolution and history (Himalayan Bön, Chinese Taoism, Persian Zurvanism, the Greek Dionysian tradition, and, in India, Dravidian Shaivism and later Tantrism) described the primal Golden Age, Era of Perfection or Age of Truth fits our knowledge of the way of life of primal peoples, and, to a lesser extent, of many hunter-gatherers and even horticulturalists of our time, and in particular in what regards the absence of State, property and individual family, their description fits the original and purest forms of primitive communism. (Some representatives of Brahmanic orthodoxy modified the original version of this view of human evolution by asserting that in the primordial era the *brahmin* caste prevailed, in the era of three the *kshatriya* caste ruled, in the era of two the *vaishya* caste was predominant, in the era of darkness the *shudra* caste reigned, and at the end of the dark era the untouchables obtained power. Before the fall of the Soviet state and the dismantling of Marxist regimes, some attempted to validate this view by claiming that the "dictatorship of the proletariat" that supposedly existed in Marxist states was the rule of the shudras.[a]). Steven Taylor writes with regard to tribal peoples in the last two centuries:[b]

[a] Biès (1985).

[b] Taylor (2003), pp. 68-69.

> ...lack of egocentrism and selfishness is probably the main reason that both hunter-gatherers and early horticultural societies are generally completely egalitarian, with no private property or social stratification. Many primal peoples seem to exist in a natural state of communism... According to Lenski's statistics in *Human Societies* (1978)—based on the data in Murdock's Ethnographic Atlas—only 2% of contemporary hunter-gatherer societies have a class system, while private ownership of land is completely absent in 89% of them (and only 'rare' in the other 11%).
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> [American aborigines] could not comprehend the concept of private ownership of land, or the massive inequalities that run through European society. As Sitting Bull complained, "The While Man knows how to make everything, but he does not know how to distribute it ... The love of possession is a disease with them. They take tithes from the poor and weak to support the rich who rule" (Wright, 1992, p. 344). While the Europeans, for their part, saw the 'communism' of the natives as a defect which had prevented them from becoming 'civilized'. As Senator Henry Dawes—whose 'Dawes Act' attempted to make Amerindians into small-scale landowners—said of the Cherokee nation in 1887,
>
> "There is not a pauper in that nation, and the nation does not owe a dollar...Yet the defect of the system was apparent. They have got as far as they can go, because they hold their land in common ... There is no selfishness, which is at the bottom of civilization." (Wright, 1992, p. 363)

Primitive communism? Marx and Engels grew up in a climate still marked by the blind enthusiasm for progress proper to Modernity, and thus, though Marx is generally supposed to have succeeded in completing the inversion of Hegel's system Feuerbach had left halfway,[80] he and Engels took for granted the view of evolution as a process of constant perfecting proper to Hegel's philosophy, which they made no attempts to surpass. In particular, they viewed primitive communism as being inferior to the subsequent stages in the process of social evolution, and their mainstream Soviet followers, who turned Marxism into a strict economic determinism, went further and conceived primitive communism as characterized by deprivation, hunger and penury (cf., for example, Ernst Mandel's *Treatise of Marxist Economics*,[a] which expressed the standard Soviet interpretation of the sequence of economic systems posited by Marxism).[81] This outright contradicts the view of the Golden Age, Era of Perfection or Age of Truth in Wisdom traditions sharing the degenerative view of social and spiritual evolution, some of which made it quite clear that, since primal humans communed in the state of *aletheia* or unveiling of the undivided Totality that is the true condition of both human beings and the rest of the universe, which was not sundered by the illusion of a separate mental subject, in the Communion state their psychological condition was characterized by absolute plenitude and hence by the greatest degree of "existential wealth."[82b] Furthermore, since they had not been subject to the creation of false needs, and the plenitude inherent in the unveiling of Totality somehow filtered into their post-Communion state, even in this condition, existentially speaking they were much richer than beings of subsequent ages.

Also most left-wing anarchists who share the belief in primitive communism reject the Marxist economist view and accept that beings in the earlier stages of human evolution did not experience deprivation and did not harbor any idea of accumulating wealth in order to better their lot. Furthermore, observation of both hunter-gatherers and horticulturalists

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[a] Mandel (1962).

[b] Weisskopf (1971); Capra (1982); Capriles (1994a).

after the time of Marx and Engels by anthropologists and researchers of stone age economics such as Pierre Clastres,[a] David Marshall Sahlins,[b] Jacques Lizot,[c] Richard Rudgley[d] and others, led them—as well as like-minded philosophers[e]—to the conclusion that, to a sizeable extent, tribal peoples of our time possess an "economy of plenty:" since their members do not have a pronounced feeling of lack or deprivation, they do not think of accumulating provisions or riches in order to increase the "level of life." And if this is so in hunter-gatherers and horticulturalists of our time, how much more so must it have been in truly primal societies, long before neolithization started anywhere in this world—i.e., at the time when our true condition of absolute plenitude and perfection, sameness and equality, perfectly unveiled in the non-relational state of Communion, and then in the relational post-Communion state relations were horizontal and communicative, so that there were no vertical relations (i.e., relations involving the fracture between one side that rules and/or enjoys privileges and another that is ruled, oppressed or exploited) in any plane whatsoever: neither in the human psyche, nor in human society, nor in the relationships between human beings and the "environment." Steven Taylor writes:[f]

> ...Lenski notes that slavery is 'extremely rare' amongst hunter-gatherers (in contrast to 'advanced horticultural' societies, 83% of which possess it) and that they tend to have a strikingly democratic system of making decisions. Many societies have nominal chiefs, but their power is usually very limited, and they can easily be deposed if the rest of the group are not satisfied with their leadership. Political decisions are not taken by the chief alone, but are usually "arrived at through informal discussions among the more respected and influential members, typically the heads of families" (Lenski, 1978, p. 125). As Briggs (1970) wrote of the Utku Eskimos of northern Canada, for instance,
>
> "The Utku, like other Eskimo bands, have no formal leaders whose authority transcends that of the separate householders. Moreover, cherishing independence of thought and action as a natural prerogative, people tend to look askance at anyone who seems to aspire to tell them what to do. (p. 42)"
>
> While as Christopher Boehm (1999) summarizes, "This egalitarian approach seems to be universal for foragers who live in small bands that remain nomadic, suggesting considerable antiquity for political egalitarianism" (p. 69).

Anthropologist Pierre Clastres notes that, when Guarani aborigines fled their habitat toward the sea coasts, upon being asked what were they fleeing, they replied, "the One:" Clastres interpreted this as meaning they were trying to flee the imminent rise of the State. Taylor goes on:[g]

> As Boehm summarizes again,
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> "Many other nonliterates [besides hunter-gatherers], people who live in permanent, settled groups that accumulate food surpluses through agriculture, are quite similar politically [to hunter-gatherers] ... These tribesmen lack strong leadership and domination

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[a] Clastres (1987, 1974).
[b] Sahlins (1974); for more on the views of Sahlins, cf. also Sahlins (1961, 1972, 1976), etc.
[c] Lizot (1985, 1992), etc.
[d] Rudgley (1993); for more on the views of this author cf. also Rudgley (1998, 2000).
[e] Savater (1985) (written before Savater forsook anarchism and political engagement in general).
[f] Taylor (2003), p. 69.
[g] Taylor (2003), p. 69.

among males, they make their group decisions by consensus and they too exhibit an egalitarian ideology.” (p. 38)

Democracy and egalitarianism appear somehow natural to primal peoples, whether they are hunter-gatherers or simple horticulturalists.

According to Marxism, the State and political power in general had to manifest as a consequence of the rise of private property, for once there was property it was necessary to protect it. Pierre Clastres, Marshal Sahlins and others have claimed, on the basis of their observations (e.g., of Sahlins' field research regarding the genesis of "Polynesian Monarchies"[a]) that, in contradiction with the theses of Marxism, it was the rise of political power (which, as we have seen, reproduces the vertical relationship between humans and gods that results from the theogenesis), which after some time gave rise to private property. In fact, Sahlins asserts that the would-be chief exploits his wives in order to be able to give goods to the community so that he may be appreciated and then at some point may be appointed chief; though Sahlins does not relate his own observations to the theses of Hegel and Sartre, his description of the genesis of power is more related with the dialectic of lover and beloved described by Sartre,[b] than with the dialectic of the master and the slave described by Hegel.[c]

However, the mythology of the pre-Buddhist Himalayan religion known as Bön (which is worth considering in view of the sizeable antiquity of its traditions) coincides with Marxism in this regard, for it claims that the introduction of private property by males—in spite of the protests of females—gave rise to struggles that could only be suppressed when, finally, all recognized a Sovereign. Though the Bön tradition asserts that the first Sovereign was of divine origin, it notes that after a short while he became corrupt and abused power—which resulted in a system of privileges that then gave rise to political, social and economic stratification.[d] At any rate, the important point is that primal societies of the Paleolithic did not exhibit any type or degree of stratification (as we have seen, even hunter-gatherers of out time fail to exhibit a clear stratification) and that political power, private property and the separate family arose and developed interdependently as a result of the "Fall" (whether it was private property that gave rise to political power or vice-versa being a secondary question). Steven Taylor writes:[e]

> ...we have already seen that social stratification and inequality were generally absent from primal cultures. Most hunter-gatherer groups, and many sedentary horticultural tribes, were strikingly democratic to a degree which the modern world has only recently begun to reach, and is still some way from equaling. In fact there is a very good case for suggesting that, at least to some extent, the modern concepts of democracy and equality were derived from primal peoples: specifically, from the native Americans. The authors of the American constitution borrowed their concept of a union of different states from the centuries-old 'Six Nations' confederacy of the Iroquois Indians—in fact the idea was actually recommended to the Europeans by a leader of the Six Nations at a treaty signing in 1744, at which Benjamin Franklin was present (Wright, 1992). Similarly, the constitution's concept of a non-hierarchical society—which was, after all, completely alien to Europe at that

[a] Sahlins (1974); cf. also Sahlins (1972, 1961, 1976).
[b] Sartre (1980).
[c] Hegel (1955).
[d] Reynolds (1989).
[e] Taylor (2003), p. 71.

time—was to a large extent inspired by the authors' observations of native American societies. In the words of Alvin M. Josephy Jr (1975),

"Colonial records show that many of the Indian peoples of the Atlantic seaboard taught the European settlers much with regard to freedom, the dignity of the individual, democracy, representative government, and the right to participate in the settling of one's affairs." (p. 39)

It's ironic that, as well as being the originators of modern capitalist democracy, the Iroquois were also partly responsible for modern communism. In 1851 Lewis Henry Morgan published his book League of the Iroquois, reporting his anthropological observations of Iroquois society. Both Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels read the book, and were inspired by what they saw as an example of a Utopian socialist society. As Engels wrote to Marx, "This gentle constitution is wonderful! There can be no poor and needy ... All are free and equal—including the women" (Wright, 1992, p. 276).

Discussions of the concept of communism began long before Morgan published his book, in the milieu in which Marx and Engels developed their theories, and Marx and Engels themselves began writing on Communism long before the publication of the book by Morgan;[83] furthermore, we have seen that they did not find in what they referred to as "primitive communism" the blueprint for the communism that in their view would be the last stage of human society. However, they certainly were inspired by learning that communism had existed and somehow still existed in their time in some human groups.

Throughout this chapter, I have been differentiating between primal humans and hunter-gatherers of our time. The point is that, as Theodore Roszak[a] has rightly noted, the tribal societies anthropologists have studied during the last few centuries, including the ones described by Morgan (whose writings, as we have seen, were used by Engels to support his theory of social evolution, and were important to Marx), Sahlins, Lizot, Clastres and many other authors cited and not cited in these pages, are not samples of the way of life prevailing in the Primordial Age (though their way of life is no doubt more similar to that of primordial humans that that of the "early Germans" fancied by Swiss jurist, cultural anthropologist and philosopher of history Johann Jakob Bachoffen [1815-1887][84]). This is so, not only because tribal cultures in existence nowadays have been disrupted—if not destroyed—by external influences, but also because, as we have seen, all human groups are part of the human species and therefore cannot elude the development, throughout the cosmic cycle, of the delusion called *avidya* or *lethe*—even though this delusion does not develop in the same direction or at the same pace in all of them. For example, attending to their technology, Yanomami Amazonian aborigines of our time must be placed in the Paleolithic; however, we must suppose that before their lands were penetrated by European missionaries, garimpeiros and other foreigners, their communities already waged war against each other on a permanent basis, their religion was shamanic rather than being of the type centered on Communion that I have referred to as "metashamanic,"[b] and in general they had strikingly degenerated in relation to primal peoples of the time when the whole of humankind was in the Paleolithic; though we have no reports of their personalities and customs before they were encroached by the white man, according to reports from the 1970s they often exhibited cruelty toward their animals

[a] Roszak (1992).

[b] This term was introduced in Capriles (1990c); then it was used in several of my more recent works, including the present book.

and many other vices.[a] (I deem it essential to insist that the religion of the Primordial Age was not shamanic in the sense in which Michael Harner[b] defined the term, which was reviewed in the preceding chapter: according to the degenerative view of human evolution and history, and as implied by the above cited studies by Jacques Cauvin and others, primal religion lay in the dissolution of the illusion of separateness in a state of Communion, without reference to gods of supernatural entities of any kind; as Sufi Master Idries Shah rightly noted,[c] shamanism is a product of the degeneration of primal spirituality, which had its authentic continuity in genuine Paths of Awakening.[d])

In the preceding chapter we saw that Tibetan Buddhism and Bön had special practices that were taught to some of the ablest students, in which demons and other of the entities that according to shamanism and quite a few non-shamanic religions could supernaturally influence the fate of human beings, manifested to the practitioners and then liberated themselves spontaneously in the reGnition of the Self-*qua*-Base. Though some might think that such practices are not appropriate for scientific-minded people like ourselves and our contemporaries, so long as we have the dispositions that, in the appropriate conditions, will induce a horror experience in which these demons and likely entities manifest, appearing not to be any less real than physical entities, these practices should not be forsaken. Likewise, on the Tantric level, Tibetan traditions conserve practices involving the visualization of oneself as a deity, such as for example the Tibetan version of Garuda (the kalding[e] or namkheding[f], which is a synthesis of the Indian Garuda and the Tibetan *khyung* bird, corresponding to the Persian *simurgh*—which the Turkish call *kerkes*—as well as to the Western phoenix and to the Chinese "red bird," identified with the phoenix or *feng huang* [Jpn. *hou-ou*]). If we wrongly think these practices belong to a stage to be categorized as childish / prehistoric in terms of Wilber's analogy between ontogenesis and phylogenesis (or, in my own view, that they belong to the shamanic level), we may think that in our age they should be forsaken; however, in my view we should keep such practices and forsake the evolutionary views demanding that they be forsaken.

To conclude, let me reproduce Steven Taylor's summary of his criticisms of Wilber's view of phylogenesis:[g]

> To summarize, then, Wilber's view of prehistoric human beings—and the application of ontogenesis to phylogenesis which prompts this view—is problematic for the following reasons. Firstly, primal peoples exhibit higher spiritual characteristics, including (a) an awareness of Spirit pervading the manifest world, (b) an awareness of the inner Spirit or *atman*, and (c) an awareness of the 'two selves', the ego and the divine self. This would paradoxically locate them at fulcrum 7, while their lack of hypothetico-deductive reasoning and their magical thinking locates them—according to Wilber's model—at fulcrum-2 or 3.
>
> Secondly, primal peoples show no sign of the egocentrism that, according to Wilber and Piaget, children at preoperational levels exhibit. Their 'universal' empathy suggests fulcrum-7 or higher, and a post-conventional morality. They experience an intense

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[a] Lizot (1985).
[b] Harner (1973).
[c] Shah (1975).
[d] Shah (1975).
[e] *mkha' lding*.
[f] *nam mkha'i lding*.
[g] Taylor (2003), pp. 72-73.

intersubjectivity, a shared sense of being with other creatures and with the phenomenal world in general, which generates compassion and an ecological sensibility.

Thirdly, primal cultures exhibit enlightened social characteristics, such as democracy and peacefulness, which, according to Wilber, should only emerge at fulcrum-5, or during the high egoic period.

There is, however, another point I would like to add briefly, which in my view further undermines the application of ontogenesis to phylogenesis. Following Gebser, Cassirer and Neumann, Wilber suggests that, like young children, the earliest human beings had no sense of separation from their environment, and no sense of subject-object duality. As Wilber (1996) writes, at fulcrum-2 “mind and world are not clearly differentiated, so their characteristics tend to get fused and confused” (1996, p. 173). Or as he elsewhere puts it typhonic man would “tend to confuse psychic with external reality, almost as a man does when he dreams” (1981, p. 46). As we say earlier, this is the basis of Wilber’s interpretation of animism: because of their pre-personal fusion, children and primal people see the whole world as an extension of themselves. But if primal peoples really did confuse internal and external reality, their survival chances would have been drastically impaired. How could you be sure whether things were really there or just images in your mind? If you were out hunting and saw a bear, you might find yourself running after an apparition and throwing your spear into empty space. Or you might see a wolf or a lion and decide that it was probably only an image in your mind, only to be ripped off into pieces a few seconds later. And even if you knew that there was something real there, in your dream-like state it would be difficult to find the alertness to react to it quickly. The business of keeping yourself alive requires a sense of differentiation between yourself and your environment. Babies live in a state of ‘pre-personal’ fusion with the world, and obviously wouldn’t survive without the help of adults—not just because of their physical inability, but also because of their lack of a sense of subject-object duality.

The truth is probably that, as I have already hinted (e.g., in my discussion of the aboriginal notion of the ‘two-selves’), early human beings did have a degree of separate-self development, but a smaller degree than ours. The difference between them and later peoples is that the latter developed a sharper and more defined sense of ego. The egos of primal peoples are not so developed that they result in a sense of disassociation from the physical body or from nature, or that individual desires take precedence over communal or universal welfare (or that they possess hypothetico-deductive reasoning powers). However, later human beings—including us moderns—possess what Barfield describes as “the individual, sharpened, spatially determined consciousness of today” (Wilber, 1981, p. 28) and so do experience a painful sense of separation from the world, from other human beings, and even from our own bodies (and are capable of hypothetico-deductive reasoning). In other words—again in opposition to the application of ontogenesis to phylogenesis—primal peoples are not at a pre-personal level, but at a less developed personal level. And as I suggested earlier, their less developed sense of ego means that whereas we experience a ‘post-egoic’ egocentrism, they exhibit a lack of egocentrism and selfishness.

What we really need, in order to fully substantiate the argument of this essay, are two things. First, we need a different view of spirituality, which could account for the fact that primal peoples are ‘spiritual’ and pre-rational at the same time... Second, we need a different view of phylogenesis, to replace the ontogenesis-based models... I would suggest that the basis of a different view of phylogenesis should be what the myths of many different cultures describe as a ‘Fall’. As many of the myths indicate, the ‘Fall’ was precisely the development I referred to earlier: the development of a much stronger and sharper sense of ego in certain human groups.

This is precisely the view I laid out in greater detail elsewhere[a] and which I have summarized here. Just as above Taylor recapitulated his criticisms to Wilber's view of phylogenesis, I must sum up my main differences with regard to Taylor's expressions. The first point is that, as shown in the preceding chapter and as noted throughout this chapter, Wilber's spectrum of consciousness—and in particular the higher fulcra of the spectrum—does not correspond to human ontogenesis. Regarding the alleged post-conventional morality of primal peoples, let us not forget that Cynics and Stoics, among others in ancient Greece (which included some of the so-called "sophists"), contrasted *physis* and *nomos*, seeing the former as the source of a life beneficial for both self and others and the latter as the source of all vices, and let us not forget that the *Tao Te Ching* and other Taoist books remind us that morality arises when the *tao* is lost, and that to a great extent virtuous actions based on morality are subject to the law of reverse effect that somehow causes them to increase the evils that morality was intended to contain. I say true primal peoples were at the pre-ethical stage because, while in the Communion state, these peoples had not lost the *tao* and therefore had no selfish or evil impulses that should be contained by morality, and though in the post-Communion state the *tao* was not patent and there was some degree of ego-delusion, experience was pervaded by the savor of the *tao* to such a degree that there was no need for a contrived conventional morality of the kind that gives rise to what following Watts I have been calling the "law of reverse effect:" though in the relational post-Communion state they experienced intersubjectivity, this experience was pervaded by the awareness of the sacredness and interdependence of all essents that derived from the unconcealment of nonseparateness and nonduality in the state of Communion; therefore, they embodied the virtues that follow from this awareness. Finally, when Taylor denies that primal peoples experience no sense of separation from the environment and so on, this was so in the post-Communion state, which, being relational, involves distinctions; however, also in the state of Communion in which they experienced no separation, these peoples had some capacity to spontaneously deal with life situations, which is not present in infants.

The succession of the states of Communion and post-Communion is surpassed in Buddhahood, which can manifest in our time and which actually manifested at the beginning of the cosmic cycle.[85] In fact, according to Mahayana Buddhism, absolute truth, which is not relational, is first realized in the Contemplation state of superior bodhisattvas, but these do not have either the capacity to remain uninterruptedly in this state, or to deal most effectively with life situations from it; therefore, they have a relational post-Contemplation state in which they deal with all sorts of life situations. It is only fully Awake Buddhas that have gone beyond the succession of a Contemplation and a post-Contemplation state, for they have totally surpassed relational relative truth and in so doing have learned to deal with life situations from the nonrelational state of absolute truth—which they do consummately, for they are not subject to the "centipede effect" inherent in relational consciousness, and hence their abilities are like those of the artisan who, according to the Chuang-tzu, drew circles by hand better than with the compass, for his qualities were integrated and thus he suffered no impediment.

If the Path has evolved with the development of the cosmic cycle, so that in our time it involves most sophisticated philosophical dissertations and so on, this is not because everything improves during the unfolding of the *kalpa* or cosmic cycle, but because as the cycle unfolds delusion gains in power, giving rise to an extraordinary development of

[a] Capriles (1994a).

secondary process and hypothetico-deductive thinking—and in fact the extreme in the development of delusion is reached when this type of thinking attains its zenith.[86] True spiritual masters respond to this degenerative development by explaining in the greatest detail possible the Path and the whole of reality in terms of secondary process and hypothetico-deductive thinking, for at this stage this is a pre-requisite for developing the faith necessary for effectively moving beyond the delusory valuation of secondary process and hypothetico-deductive thinking (as otherwise this process and thinking would raise objections that would prevent us from letting go of self-conscious delusion): this is the reason why Ashvagosha asserted that we must use words in order to go beyond words, and though this is not what Wittgenstein had in mind when he employed the simile of using stairs to get to a place where we no longer need them and can do away with them, it is aptly expressed by the simile in question.

Everything tends to show that human evolution has been a process of gradual degeneration consisting in the development of the basic human delusion called *lethe* or *avidya*. As we have seen repeatedly, once ecological crisis reaches a threshold level, this basic delusion completes its *reductio ad absurdum* and finally can and must be surpassed. Thereafter, if the *manvantara* or cosmic cycle that has ended is not the final one in the planet, a new cycle starts, beginning with a new Age of Perfection, Age of Truth or Golden Age (which, it is most important to note, would be qualitatively different from the preceding one); if the *manvantara* or cosmic cycle that has ended is the final one in the planet, there begins the Millennium of harmony, spirituality and fulfillment predicted in the *Kalachakra Tantra*, as well as in the John's Apocalypse, in the Book of Ismailians,[a] and so on.

The Ideological Character of the Sciences, The "New Paradigm" Championed in the 1980s and 1990s, And the Role of Science and Technology in the New Age

Scientific theories and paradigms are intellectual constructions that, to a great extent for emotional reasons, human beings feel compelled to force upon reality, and which no matter how scientifically plausible they may seem, or to what extent we may believe them to faithful describe reality, necessarily distort to a greater or lesser degree what they are meant to interpret. Nonetheless, scientists present the "findings" of the sciences, and in particular those they themselves arrive at, as the objective, faithful, exact description of reality: this is why quite a few authors have concluded that the sciences are but ideologies. Though this is not the place to carry out a thorough, extensive demonstration of the fact that the sciences are but ideologies, I deemed it important to provide the following summary of some of the arguments that have been used to this aim, including some of the ones I myself used in 1994a (a revised and corrected version of the work in question will be prepared when conditions make it possible).

One insurmountable difficulty the sciences face in their attempts to establish definitive truths is that immutable, universal scientific laws cannot be derived from empiric observation, for, as David Hume showed long ago,[b] no matter how many observations a scientist carries out, he or she cannot carry out an infinite number of observations—and

[a] Under the direction of Brice Parain (1972), p. 281.
[b] Hume (1964). This principle was expressed most precisely by physicist Max Born.

there is no way to make sure what repeats itself in a very high number of cases will repeat itself in *all* possible cases. Aware of this, and of the fact that we do not derive our theories directly from experience, but that we deduce them from our own principles or intellectual illuminations, and later on we try to validate them by testing them against experience, even an advocate of the supposed validity of knowledge and certainly no Luddite such as Karl Popper felt compelled to note that if no experience contradicts a theory, scientists are entitled to accept it *provisionally* as a *probable* truth: Popper rejected the essentialism of the rationalist philosophy of science, which supposes that the aim of inquiry is a complete and final knowledge of the essence of things, on the grounds that no scientific theory can be completely substantiated and that the acceptance of a new theory gives rise to as many problems as it solved.[a][87] A weighty piece of evidence supporting the view that no scientific theory could ever be absolutely substantiated was the theorem that Léon Brillouin conceived in 1932, purportedly proving that "information is not gratuitous:" any observation of a physical system increases the system's entropy in the lab, and hence the "output" of a given experiment, which must be defined by the relation obtained and the concomitant increase of entropy, will always be lower than the unit (1), which would represent exactness of information, and only in rare cases will it approximate it—which means that the perfect experiment is impossible to achieve, for it would have to involve an infinite expenditure of human activity.[b]

For his part, Gregory Bateson noted that divergent sequences, which are those involving individuals, and particularly individual molecules, cannot be predicted. He wrote:[c]

> The curious thing is that the more precise my laboratory methods, the more unpredictable the occurrences will be. If [in predicting the effects of a stone hitting a glass] I employ the most homogeneous glass I may find, I polish its surface until obtaining the most exact optical uniformity, and I control as minutely as possible the movement of my stone, making sure that the impact be perfectly vertical, all that I will achieve with these efforts is that the occurrences be all the more unpredictable.

In contrast, convergent sequences could be universally predictable, but only if we had access to all the necessary information; since in general we do not have all the necessary information, it is not possible to *prove* a hypothesis, except in the abstract realm of pure tautology.[d] However, tautologies do not offer new or useful knowledge, and hence the only hypotheses that may be proved are useless ones.

As the reader surely knows, Kurt Gödel's incompleteness theorem showed that any logical system must contain at least one premise that cannot be proven or verified without the system contradicting itself, and therefore that it is impossible to establish the logical consistency of any complex deductive system without supposing principles of reasoning the internal consistency of which is as open to questioning as the system itself.[e] Therefore, it is clear that, in all scientific disciplines, formal or empirical, to take a scientific theory for

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[a] Popper (1961).
[b] Brillouin (1959); De Sousa Santos (1988).
[c] Bateson (1990), p. 37 (I retranslated the passage from the Spanish).
[d] Bateson (1990), pp. 39-40.
[e] Gödel (1962, 2001).

a definitive universal law or truth would involve a bias and a misrepresentation of reality—and hence would constitute an ideological operation.

Another point is that the human psyche functions in such a way as to structure its perception in terms of ideologically conditioned expectations, and hence in their observations scientists tend to discover what their theories require them to find. Gaston Bachelard noted that prejudices, such as opinions and previous "knowledge," condition the way researchers interpret their empirical observations, becoming epistemological obstacles that impair their capacity to admit that the results obtained may fail to correspond to the *a priori* theoretical construction that caused them to expect a specific outcome.[a88] Edgar Morin, in order to demonstrate that observational judgments are conditioned by ideology, and that this does not happen solely in the field of scientific experimentation, but in all walks of life, offered his readers the story of how once he saw a car overlooking a red traffic light and frontally hitting a small bike. When he stopped to offer his testimony, the bike's driver acknowledged it was him who had overlooked the red light, and it was him who had hit the car with his bike (which was corroborated by the marks on the side of the car's body): Morin's socialist, righteous ideology had conditioned his perception and caused him to see something different from what actually occurred.[b] In the case of scientific experiments planned beforehand, not only is the scientist's perception likely to be conditioned in a way similar to Morin's at the time of the accident, but the way the experiment is designed and the criteria for the evaluation of its results are determined by the researcher's interests and expectations, which in turn are determined by his or her ideology. This was acknowledged by Italian Marxist philosopher and activist Antonio Gramsci, who wrote "in truth science is also a superstructure, an ideology",[c] and it has been substantiated with many pages of examples and reasonings in the book *The Golem*: *What You Should Know about Science*, intended to show the circularity in the logic of science (in Sextus' sense of the term, corresponding to the fallacy of *petitio principii*), and that scientists often see what they want to see.[d] (I am referring to observations conditioned by ideologically-determined self-deceit rather than resulting from the fully conscious attempt to deceive others, but often researchers have also done the latter; as way of example, in the book under consideration we are reminded that A. S. Eddington subjected his pictures of an eclipse to "cosmetic surgery" in order to demonstrate Einstein's predictions...[e])

It is universally known that, as Thomas Kuhn showed, all scientific paradigms and theories so far, even while they were universally accepted, were contradicted in experimentation by a number of observations, which scientists consistently ignored until those observations became too abundant—at which point they were compelled to develop a new paradigm or theory in order to account for the hitherto ignored observations. However, then the new paradigm or theory was in its turn contradicted by a certain number of observations, which at some point became too abundant, and so yet another paradigm or theory had to be developed. Therefore, the process had to repeat itself again and again—which is the reason why, throughout the history of science, countless theories have been

[a] Bachelard (1957).
[b] Morin (1981).
[c] Gramsci (1998), p.63.
[d] Collins & Pinch (1998).
[e] Collins & Pinch (1998).

viewed for given periods as verified through experience, and yet at some point they have had to be rejected and replaced by new theories. This shows that, so far, taking a scientific interpretation of reality as perfectly corresponding to it, has involved an ideological operation—and thus that in this context elusion / bad faith and ideology have lay precisely in the belief that there are scientific theories that are verifiable through experience (and that, when verified, they are simply true).[a89]

Paul K. Feyerabend has consistently argued that there is no scientific rationality, that the whole of the epistemological rules that sciences impose on themselves are violated every now and then—and not only are they violated, but they must be violated if the sciences are to continue progressing—and that (as already shown) the assumption that theories must adapt themselves to our observations implies overlooking the essentially ideological character of observational judgments. He concluded that science is no more than an ideology among many others, that Western reason and science are but belief systems having no greater validity than alternative systems including magic and witchcraft, and that "success in science depends not only on rational argument, but also on a mixture of subterfuge, rhetoric and propaganda."[b90] Not only do human intellectual productions in general have an ideological character, but for centuries the ideological productions in question have served for the justification, pseudo-legitimation and implementation of power; in particular, Michel Foucault and Gilles Deleuze[c91] have noted that philosophy and science are more than ideologies, since for many centuries philosophical systems, and for a shorter time scientific disciplines and theories (such as psychoanalysis), have had the role of an "abstract machine or generalized axiomatic" that functions as the matrix that makes possible the very existence of power—their function being to provide power with the forms of knowledge necessary to sustain the models on the basis of which it will have to structure itself in each different period.

So it seems that the only acceptable scientific criterion for determining the validity of science is the one established by Alfred Julius Ayer, which is that of practice.[d] He tells us that we are authorized to have faith in our procedure insofar as it carries out the function it is destined to perform—that is, so long as it allows us to predict future experience and therefore to control our environment. However, this criterion suggests the very opposite of what Ayer intended to prove, for the sciences have failed in carrying out the function they were intended to perform: while the avowed aim of the technological applications of science was the improvement of human life and the welfare of humankind, they have produced the ecological crisis that has led humankind to the brink of self-destruction. Furthermore, scientific disciplines have not allowed us to predict future experience, for rather than predicting that the technological application of science would lead us to the brink of self-destruction, until very recently, scientists predicted it would greatly improve human life and give rise to all kinds of marvels. Thus it is clear that Desiderius Erasmus was quite right when he spoke of a Golden Age at the beginning of time, and of science as a demonic catalyst of human degeneration.[92] Keeping in mind the already quoted saying by

[a] Kuhn (1970).
[b] Feyerabend (1984, 1982, 1987).
[c] Deleuze (1980); Foucault (1976, 1978).
[d] Ayer (1981).

Schumacher that goes, "the devil is not evil, he just follows the wrong star," consider the following passage of *In Praise of Folly*:[a]

> ...God, great architect of the Universe, forbade tasting of the tree of Science, as though it were the poison of happiness, and also Saint Paul condemned it openly as a source of pride and evil, following the idea that, in my view, inspired Saint Bernard,[93] when he called that mountain where Lucifer took up residence, the "mountain of science."

The sciences as we know them are a product of the gradual degeneration that took place throughout the cosmic cycle, and in particular of the development of the inseparable couple at the root of the law of the samsaric "law of inverted effect:" (a) the prevailing instrumental interest, and (b) the fragmentary perception that was illustrated by the Buddhist fable of the men with the elephant—which together cause us to perceive essents either as threats / obstacles to destroy or as tools to use / goodies to enjoy, and develop a powerful instrumental technology in order to destroy what we perceive as threats and obstacles, and appropriate what we perceive as goodies and tools. Thus there can be no doubt that Herbert Marcuse was right when he claimed that science is ideological insofar as it has built into its concepts and methods an interest in instrumental action—that is, in the technical manipulation and control of nature—and hence it is necessarily committed to an exploitative view of nature and human beings, rather than neutrally and accurately reflecting an objective reality.[b] He wrote:[c]

> The science of nature develops under the technological *a priori* which projects nature as potential instrumentality, stuff of control and organization. And the apprehension of nature as (hypothetical) instrumentality precedes the development of all particular organization.

And also:[d]

> The point which I am trying to make is that science, by virtue of its own method and concepts, has projected and promoted a universe in which the domination of nature has remained linked to the domination of man—a link that tends to be fatal to this universe as a whole.

In terms of the worldview expressed in this book, the above is so because so long as we function in terms of communicative relations, we cannot perceive—and therefore we cannot examine—the essents we relate with, in the objectifying, dissecting manner proper to the instrumental science that steadily developed in the last five millennia, and in particular over the last five centuries,[94] which could only be conceived and implemented after human reason structured itself in terms of instrumental primary process relations, becoming "instrumental reason." Since, as explained in a previous section of this chapter, once instrumental primary process relations and reason develop, it is impossible to limit

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[a] Erasmus (1984). The excerpt was translated into English from the Spanish translation by the author of this book.

[b] Marcuse (1964), ch. 6: "From Negative to Positive Thinking: Technological Rationality and the Logic of Domination."

[c] Marcuse (1964), ch. 6, p. 126.

[d] Marcuse (1964), ch. 6, p. 135.

their ambit to particular sets of relations, this type of science inevitably had to produce the instrumental technology that then was applied indistinctly to the non-human environment and to other human beings, destroying the former and dehumanizing the latter and the subject who applied it as well—a key result of which Henry David Thoreau observed as early as one and a half century ago, expressing it in *Walden* with the phrase, "Men have become the tools of their tools."[a] In fact, as Lewis Mumford more recently was right to note, the modern ethos released a Pandora's box of mechanical marvels that has absorbed all human purposes into *The Myth of the Machine*.[b95] And yet this does not mean there is a culprit, to be identified as technology: despite the nihilistic and shallow character of most of his views, Cioran was right in noting that it is not the machines that are leading humankind to its ruin and damnation, for these were invented by us humans because we were already on the way to ruin and damnation: it was because of this that we devised means which would help us attain it more rapidly and effectively.[c]

The above does not mean that we should simply do away with science and technology: given the enormous population of the world, science and technology would inevitably continue to be part of the environment of our species, and thus survival and the transition to a New Age of plenitude and perfection would not imply our regression to a savage yet idyllic Garden of Eden. As Tibetan Lama Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche noted with regard to what he christened "Shambhala vision:"[d]

> Shambhala vision does not reject technology or simplistically advocate that we go "back to nature."

Since the vision of spiritual and social evolution as a degenerative process came to us through the awareness of Awake Ones—who are beyond judgment and, insofar as they do not feel separate from becoming, are aware that all that arises in the course of becoming may be turned into the Path—this vision does not dwell on judgment and rejection of the products of degenerative evolution.

As we have seen, the progressive exacerbation of perceptual fragmentation and the generalization of instrumental relations (which together gave rise to instrumental technology and which this technology in its turn has helped develop) have achieved the *reductio ad absurdum* of human delusion; if the immediately following stage of human evolution were catalyzed by the wisdom that results from generalized advancement on the Path of Awakening within genuine wisdom traditions, the outcome would be the widespread restoration of the nonrelational state of Communion. And since this state would alternate with a relational post-Communion state,[96] into which the realization of the sacred character of the universe proper to the state of Communion would somehow filter down, imbuing our relational experience with a sense of sacredness, as heralded by Morris Berman a re-enchantment of the world would take place[e97]—which would go along with the restoration of communicative relations in all fields. (However, this re-enchantment of the world would not amount to a restoration of shamanic experience and spiritual practice, making our vicissitudes depend on the whims of elemental spirits and other powerful

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[a] Thoreau (1970), p. 175 (original Ed., p. 142).
[b] Mumford (1967/1970).
[c] Cioran (1964). Cited in Calinescu (1987), p. 149.
[d] Trungpa (1984).
[e] Berman (1984).

beings, for its nature would be metashamanic and as such it would have the diametrically opposite result of freeing us from the power of the beings ruling the lands of our psyches.)

As a result of the above, for the first time in recorded history our species would engage in wisdom-imbued, pancommunicative dealings with an environment involving science and technology—which would automatically result in a radical transformation of these two, in a manner not too different from the one foreseen by Marcuse, who asserted that the liberation of both human beings and the rest of nature (and, I find it necessary to add, the survival of both) would require a new science grounded in a non-instrumental interest (and therefore in a "non-instrumental rationality") and involving a view of nature as "a totality of life to be protected and cultivated" rather than as a utility to use and manipulate.[a][98] (Habermas accepted some and rejected other of Marcuse's theses as to the ideological character of science; as observed in the preceding section of this chapter, he rejected the claim that relations with the nonhuman environment would also have to become communicative, and thus he could but reject Marcuse's thesis that science and technology must cease responding to an instrumental interest [and to the corresponding rationality], and undergo the radical transformation being discussed.[b][99])

If, as warned above, the transformation necessary for survival could not consist in a regression to a savage yet idyllic Garden of Eden as yet unspoiled by degeneration, far less could it consist in a return to a stage in the process of evolution in which degeneration had developed to a considerable degree, but was slightly less advanced than in our time. In particular, it could not involve the reinstatement of a universal theocratic state, as explicitly proposed by Frithjof Schuon in a book in which he made an apology of imperialism,[c] and as implicit in works by other members of the Traditionalist movement. To begin with, I find it extremely difficult to understand that anyone may aspire at the restoration of a state of affairs involving extreme degeneration and oppression, featuring the most oppressive forms of the "right-wing institutions" that developed as delusion unfolded[100] (and possibly even an Inquisition or its equivalents[101]), and being more distant than the present state of affairs from the end of the cosmic cycle and hence from the prophesized restoration of the ubiquity of the Communion of all human beings in the unconcealment of our common nature, and the perfect condition that would follow from this. Furthermore, were this regress possible, delusion would restart its development toward its *reductio ad absurdum*, again leading us to a condition roughly analogous to the one we face today. Fortunately, however, the dynamics of the relations between primary process and secondary process would not permit the reversion of evolution and history, and the reproduction of an already surpassed stage in the process of negative spiritual and social evolution.

The essence of the upcoming New Age will be the restoration of the ubiquity of Communion in the unconcealment of our common nature, characterized by total plenitude and perfection, and therefore of the virtues that spontaneously manifest out of this Communion, and the total surpassing of the right-wing institutions that arose in the course of the process of degeneration. In order to institute the Age in question, rather than returning to the past, we must go ahead without ever turning back—so long as we fulfill two requirements: (1) that on the individual plane we tread the Path of Awakening in the context of a genuine Wisdom-tradition, so as to surpass the basic human delusion that at

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[a] Marcuse (1972), p. 61.
[b] Habermas (1984).
[c] Schuon (1984).

this stage has developed into a condition of extreme perceptual fragmentation and instrumentality, and achieve the "transference of world" (Tib., chi phowa[a]) of the evil, harmful and instrumental beings which are our own evil, harmful and instrumental thoughts;[102] and (2) that we fully engage in achieving the necessary changes on the social, economic, political, cultural and religious planes. (These two planes are indivisible, for insofar as the psyche is structured in terms of the internalized relations of human beings with other human beings and the rest of the environment, for the psyche to change, these relations must change, and since the way human beings relate with other human beings and the rest of the environment reproduces the relations structuring the human psyche, an effective transformation of the "material" relations of human beings is only possible in the measure in which the psyche has undergone an equally real transformation.)

In the second half of the twentieth century, ecologists and holistic thinkers made the point that mechanist paradigms and theories elicit and justify the instrumental manipulation of the ecosphere and human beings, and at the same time cause this manipulation to ignore the structure and function of living systems, interfering with them and eventually destroying them. Thus in the 1980s and 1990s they enthusiastically proposed that such paradigms and theories be replaced by what they referred to as a nonmechanist, holistic, systemic "New Paradigm," which they saw as the panacea for the evils produced by the current type of science and technology—but which has often incurred in the reductionism, denounced in the preceding chapter, of applying to all levels of reality the models of the New Physics and cybernetics (and in general of the sciences that according to Deleuze have become the official language and knowledge of contemporary apparatuses of power, which these apparatuses find appealing, to a great extent because they do not have to acknowledge human subjectivity). Furthermore, though the substitution of processes for entities typical of systemic theories of the kind developed by the school of Norbert Wiener[103] may under some conditions be a step in surpassing the illusion of substantiality, the mandatory transformation of science and technology cannot be reduced to the replacement of the old mechanist paradigm with the "New Paradigm" (provided it is permissible to speak of such a thing as a paradigm shift, which Walt Anderson thinks is not[b]), for this would but place a more powerful tool in the hands of instrumental reason / fragmentary perception. And, in fact, as Don Michael noted in the New Paradigm Symposium organized by the Elmwood Institute toward the end of 1985 at Esalen Institute, systems thinking is at work in current US weapons programs and war strategies (including those designed for the protection of Middle East oil), as well as in lobbying for weapons producers and so on—all of which is contrary to the avowed aims of the advocates of New Paradigm thinking.[c] The transformation of science and technology that is mandatory cannot be implemented by the instrumental rationality / fragmentary perception at the root of the predicament we currently face, for these would use for their destructive aims whichever paradigm proves most effective. However, if this delusion, rationality and perception were surpassed, and the alternation of a state of Communion and one of post-Communion were restored, the necessary transformation of science and technology would occur automatically.[104] And if this transformation could be said to entail a paradigm shift, this shift will not lie merely in the replacement of the old mechanistic theories by Wienierian

[a] *'chi 'pho ba*.
[b] Anderson (1986).
[c] Michael (1986).

system theories, but mainly in the replacement of the fragmentary approach for a holistic one, of the instrumental approach for a communicative one, of the quantitative approach for a qualitative one, and of the approach based on values such as competition, growth, consumption, level of life and so on, for one based on Communion, homeostasis, quality of life, wholesomeness of the ecosphere, equity, freedom, peace and so on—corresponding to some extent to the way the "New Paradigm" was defined by Klaus Offe and Elías Díaz.[a][105]

Furthermore, we have seen that Kuhn showed that all past paradigms required scientists to ignore evidence in order to continue to believe in their validity, and yet at some point such evidence became so abundant that a new paradigm had to be devised. There seem to be no reason to assume the same could not happen with the so-called "New Paradigm"—and, in fact, authors including Walt Anderson[b] have adduced the ideological character of science in order to warn that the systemic, so-called "New Paradigm" is not the suddenly discovered final truth regarding the structure and function of reality, but simply another interpretation of it, not necessarily less biased, flawed and ideological than its predecessors. (A wider discussion of works proposing a paradigm shift—such Capra's *The Turning Point* and subsequent works[c]—in which we denounce, on the one hand, Niklas Luhmann's instrumental, conservative, nearly fascist theory of society as an autopoietic system,[106] and, on the other, Jürgen Habermas' rejection of all systemic theories of society on the grounds that they automatically lead to flaws like the ones inherent in Luhmann's theory,[d] was carried out in three older works of mine.[e])[107]

To conclude the discussion of modern science, it seems important to consider what I see as Ken Wilber's error in the Preface to *Quantum Questions*:[f] his rejection of the usage of findings of physics to demonstrate mysticism as an error detrimental to real mysticism, which he accompanied by the warning that it would be a grave mistake to believe that internalizing a worldview might suffice as a means to attain some form of mystic awareness. To begin with, this warning seems to be out of the point, for among those who have resorted to findings of physics to lend force to the views of mystical systems, to my knowledge no serious, thorough author has asserted that internalizing a worldview may suffice as a means to attain some form of mystic awareness.

Belief in the absolute veracity of syllogisms of the kind *samsara* generally holds as valid is a core fetter holding us in *samsara*, and thus in itself and by itself the use of words and syllogisms cannot lead beyond *samsara*. However, we have seen that the Mahayana sage Ashvagosha asserted that we have to use words in order to go beyond words: in an initial stage of the Path the use of words and syllogisms may be extremely important for neutralizing the doubts and objections delusive human reason may raise in order to discourage potential practitioners from engaging in the main practices of the Path of Awakening and thus from having the possibility of breaking loose of the fetters this delusive reason imposes on us. In particular, words and syllogisms are essential means for developing the unshakeable conviction that we are possessed by delusion, that this delusion is the root not only of *duhkha* but also of the ecological crisis that threatens our survival,

[a] Offe (1985); Díaz (1989).
[b] Anderson (1986).
[c] Capra (1982, 1986, 1988, 1996).
[d] Luhmann & Habermas (1971); Luhmann (1982, 1990a, 1990b); Maturana (1985); Rodriguez (1987); von Foerster (1985).
[e] Capriles & Hočevar (1991, 1992), and Capriles (1994a).
[f] Wilber (1984).

that there is a *nirvana* consisting in the dissolution of delusion, that there is a Path leading to this dissolution, and that this Path must have a given structure and function.

In *Ch'an* or *Zen* Buddhism, and in the original *Madhyamaka Prasangika* school of "Thoroughly Nonabiding Madhyamikas" [Skt., *sarwadharmapratisthanavadin*; Tib., rabtu minepar mawa[a]]),[108] paradox has been used regularly to lead the practitioner's attempt to understand in terms of delusorily valued concepts to collapse, so that the mind may have the possibility of temporarily collapsing together with the *samsara* that springs from it. It is well known that in present-day physics seeming paradoxes have to be faced again and again, which physicists try hard to understand, and Fritjof Capra[b] has implied that while so doing extraordinary individuals might have an initial experience of voidness. Even if this were truly possible, it certainly would not make physics into a Path of Awakening; however, it could lead the physicist to look for an authentic teacher in a genuine tradition of Awakening and thus set on a Path—which would certainly be most valuable. And, at any rate, nothing forbids both physicists and laymen from using the findings of physics as words "in order to go beyond words."

Does the above mean that physics can *prove* the worldview of systems such as Mahayana Buddhism and the like? The sciences cannot demonstrate a worldview, for as shown in this section, it is not correct to claim that the sciences discover the "truth:" as noted in the context of Kuhn's findings, throughout the development of the sciences, new theories contradicting older ones have always replaced the latter. Even though some claim that at some point definitive theories that will not be replaced by new ones may be found, we have no indications that this has come to pass so far—and, at any rate, we have seen that no digital map can correspond exactly to the analog territory it describes. However, in our time we have been indoctrinated to believe that the findings of the hard sciences are truer than the assumptions of common sense, and hence, insofar as most physicists who have indirectly "observed" subatomic reality through the tools devised to that aim, and who, employing mathematics, have conceived comprehensive theories of matter, have contradicted the view of common sense that takes as absolute truth our samsaric experience of the world as a plurality of substances, as a concrete reality, and so on, and have seemed to agree with the nonsubstantialistic and holistic worldview of nondual wisdom traditions (such as the "higher" forms of Buddhism and the like), provided that we keep aware of the fact that the sciences cannot deliver the truth, that the truth is unthinkable, that no map can correspond exactly to the territory it interprets and so on, we may use the theories of these physicists as provisory antidotes to the assumptions of common sense and equally provisory supports for the theoretical views of the genuine nonsubstantialistic, nondual wisdom traditions.[109] In "postmodern" terminology, we may be allowed to use metanarratives based on physics as antidotes to the metanarratives of common sense, so long as we do not lose sight of the fact that both are but metanarratives.

It is well known that Einstein concluded that all entities were manifestations of a single universal energy field, and implied that their limits were indeterminate and that they were not substantial in a most important Aristotelian sense of the term, for they did not continuously conserve the matter/energy constituting them.[110] He concluded as well that dimensionality was relative, but his theories still presupposed the existence of an objective space through which the particles passed, an objective time that enabled them to pass

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[a] *rab tu mi gnas par smra ba*.
[b] Capra (1983).

through space, and a maximum speed for this passing; furthermore, in the belief that, if this were not so, God would be "playing dice with the universe," together with Podolski and Rosen he devised the EPR imaginary experiment in order to discard the existence of the subatomic nonlocal connections that seemingly could be inferred from the views of quantum physicists such as Heisenberg and Bohr. However, in 1964 John Bell discovered the theorem bearing his name,[111] and in the following decades the development of a sufficiently precise measuring technology made it possible for French physicist Alain Aspect to carry out in 1982, at the University of Paris-Sud, a real experiment roughly equivalent to the EPR. The results of this experiment led quite a few physicists to agree that, on the dimensional level of Plank's constant, reality seems to be holistic rather than consist of a plurality of discrete substances (physicist John Wheeler devised what he called Recognition Physics, which was intended to establish how dimensionality arose out of a nondimensional reality,[a] whereas physicist David Bohm developed his holonomic theory, which attempted to show that space and time arise out of a holistic reality in which they have no objective existence[b]). So far as we do not take any of these theories to be proven facts, we should be allowed to use them all as counterweights to our usual, discrete experience of the realm of intermediate dimensions, so that *we take neither of them to be absolutely real and thus we become free from the nose pulling rope of blind belief*.

Ken Wilber objected to the above on the basis of Fritjof Capra's usage of Geoffrey Chew's *bootstrap hypothesis*, according to which there were no irreducible building blocks of matter but sets of relations, and which therefore seemed to be a paradigmatic example of the way systems theories and similar approaches may be used for undoing the illusion of substantiality and concreteness. Systems approaches deal with subsystems of relations between entities, which in their turn may be considered as subsystems of relations between smaller-scale entities, which in their turn may be seen as relations between entities of an even smaller scale... Since the "smallest" material entity posited by physics is the quark, which does not occupy any space whatsoever, all reality should be made up of relations between quarks. Well, the *bootstrap hypothesis* claimed that the quark, rather than being a material entity, was but a postulate of fragmentary thinking, and that our perception of the universe as a sum of material parts arose due to the self-consistence of the whole. Since this view was such an excellent example of the systems thinking at the root of the so-called New Paradigm and seemed to be in agreement with various Eastern mystical philosophies, Fritjof Capra used it in order to substantiate these philosophies. However, it seems that recent findings do not support the bootstrap theory, but at any rate this theory is no longer *en vogue* among physicists; since a discarded hypothesis, rather than being seen as evidence of truth, may be seen as evidence of untruth, Wilber concluded Capra's use of Chew's theory was detrimental to the cause of mysticism.

Something similar could happen with other theories dealing with the seemingly holistic reality of the dimensional level of Plank's constant. As we have seen, one of these is Bohm's holonomic theory, which, besides running the risk of being refuted in the future, involves significant logical defects. In particular, in the writings in which he describes his theory, Bohm does not separate the phenomenal from the nonphenomenal, and thus incurs in inconsistencies similar to the one that Kant found in Leibniz's *Monadology*.[c] (Leibniz

[a] Gliedman (1984).
[b] Cf. Bohm (1980); Weber (1982a, 1982b).
[c] Kant (1966), Part I, Ch. 3, Appendix on the Amphibology of the Concepts of Reflection.

claimed that space is no more than relations between monads, and made it clear that the latter were *nonphenomenal*. Kant objected that if there were such a thing as nonphenomenal monads, positing phenomenal space as the result of the relations between monads would amount to mixing up two unmixable levels of reality: the phenomenal and one that would be absolutely other with regard to it. According to Russell and Whitehead's theory of logical types,[a] contradictions between terms are "real" only when both terms belong to the same logical type; in terms of this theory, Leibniz incurred in a breach of logic, for he infringed the rule according to which what belongs to a logical type different from that of the class being considered may neither be included nor be excluded in the class—a breach that was neither nullified nor mitigated by Gödel's logical objections to the theory in question and similar systems,[b] or by Gregory Bateson's objecting in simpler terms that, for the theory of logical types to be applied, its rules have to be violate[c][112]—all of which implies that anyone who may have thought this theory did away with the contradictions that have been perceived in Aristotelian logic, would have been utterly wrong.) David Bohm posited what he called an "implicate order," which he defined as not involving space and time, but which he referred to by compounds such as "holo*movement*" and "holo*flux*," involving the terms "movement" and "flux," which in their turn imply space and time; in order to justify the use of these terms, he noted that in this realm there was a movement "from here to here"—which is absurd, for movement has to take place between a "here" and a "there," or else it not movement at all. Furthermore, in addition to the explicate order involving apparently separate space and time and apparently discrete essents, and the implicate order that in his view does not involve any of these, Bohm posited a third category, which in his view was like the matrix from the other two arose, and which he called "the spirit"—this category, if left unsubstantiated and unexplained, being an unnecessary metaphysical postulate that would place Bohm's theories both beyond the realm of positive science, and beyond those of philosophical phenomenism and phenomenology.

There can be no doubt that employing theories involving logical inconsistencies as proofs of the views of mystical systems is detrimental to the cause of mysticism. However, as noted above, the same will not be the case if the physical theories used do not exhibit logical inconsistencies of this kind, and so it would be perfectly admissible to use Bohm's theory if it were depurated of concepts such as a movement or flux taking place in a realm not involving continuous space or time, or occurring "from here to here," and so on.[113] However, no matter what theory of physics we may use as an antidote to those of common sense, it would be mandatory to warn our readers or interlocutors that science cannot access absolute reality, that scientific theories are uncertain and sooner or later are replaced for new theories, that science is no more than ideology, and that one is using a scientific theory merely in order to show that current scientific *beliefs* contradict the *beliefs* of common sense. This would amount to using scientific theories as *dispensable* antidotes to erroneous commonsense, rather than as positive theses to be conserved after use in the mistaken belief that they faithfully reflect the structure and function of reality: if we use a nail to extract another nail, the new nail must not be left in situ, and if we use a ghost to chase away another ghost, we must realize the new ghost not to be truly existent.

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[a] Russell & Whitehead (1910-1913).
[b] Cf. Gödel (1962).
[c] Bateson (1972).

The above is the essence of the *via oppositionis*[a] that has been widely applied in both East and West. In the East, two most striking examples of this method are the dialectic of Lao-tzu and *Madhyamika* dialectic—and in particular Hui-neng's dialogical use of interrelated opposites, which he expressed as follows:[b]

> When you are questioned, if someone asks about being, reply in terms of nonbeing. If someone asks about nonbeing, reply in terms of being. If you are questioned about the ordinary individual, reply by describing the sage. If you are asked about the sage, reply in terms of the ordinary individual. From this method of reciprocal opposition there arises the comprehension of the Middle Way (*Madhyamaka*). Each and every time you are questioned, give an answer implying the opposite [of what you are expected to reply].

In the West, Heraclitus often affirmed interrelated opposites in the same paragraphs of his book—seemingly not in order to assert reality to be conceptual but contradictory, as Hegel did, but in order to cause the attempt to understand reality in terms of concepts to trip, tumble and collapse together with the mind that, as we have seen, is the root of *samsara* (the already quoted fr. 206 DK of Heraclitus' is a good example of this: "Things as a whole are whole and non-whole, identical and non-identical, harmonic and non-harmonic; the one is born from the whole and from the one all things are born"). An even more striking instance of the *via oppositionis* in Greece was the method of *isosthenia* (which Democritus of Abdera allegedly transmitted to Anaxarchus of Abdera, who for his part supposedly transmitted it to Pyrrho of Elis, founder of the Skeptic School of Hellenistic philosophy, and which reputedly was also applied by Protagoras, as well as by Arcesilas, who purportedly introduced into the Academy), which seemed to be just the same as Hui-neng's method of interrelated opposites, for it consisted in balancing evidence with contradictory evidence so as to lead beings to cease taking one view as true and its opposite as untrue—and possibly to lead the mind to collapse. Another instance of this method is the argument *in utramque partem* or "in favor of both sides" (applied by Carneades when, in Rome, one day he preached the need for justice and the next day preached against it[c]). Etc.[114]

Wilber says the true battle is not fought between science and religion, but between (a) the forms of both that are verifiable or refutable through experience, and (b) the spurious forms of both, which are dogmatic and can neither be verified not be refuted through experience. Actually, as we have already seen, the ideological character of the sciences lies precisely in the mistaken belief that theories can be verified through experience, and the condition for the sciences not to be ideologies is that scientists never lose awareness of the fact that experience cannot absolutely verify their theories (though it may certainly refute them). With regard to spirituality, the experiences of the formless realms are themselves the verification of the existence of these realms, but they do not in any way demonstrate the authenticity of the mystic systems that transmit methods for attaining those experiences and that posit them as the highest spiritual accomplishments; on the contrary, such systems are sources of error and falsehood, for they help practitioners improve their self-deceit mechanisms in order to ascend in *samsara*, finally leading them to

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[a] This concept was emphasized in Elorduy (1983).
[b] A shorter version of this appears in Wong-Mou-Lam (1969), p. 99. For the longer versions see: Suzuki (1972); Watts (1956).
[c] BénatouïI (2001), p. 34.

take spurious, transient and conditioned achievements to be the true, definitive realization of the unconditioned.

In case there is a battle, it is fought, on the one hand, between science that is ideology insofar as it does not know its real nature and its real limits, and science that is not ideology insofar as it knows its real nature and its real limits; and on the other hand, between the pseudo-mysticism that leads its practitioners to establish themselves in apparently non-dual states that in truth are transient and spurious, and the genuine non-dual mysticism that allows us to discover the unborn, which is undying and absolutely true, and thus constitutes the only true Refuge.

The Current Decadence and *reductio ad absurdum* of Modernity Vs the Upcoming, Truly Postmodern New Age

In the last decades of the last century, it became fashionable for philosophers and sociologists to interpret the current, advanced stage of modernity in which all that has to do with this period has entered a stage of decadence and achieved its *reductio ad absurdum*, as constituting a stage beyond modernity to be known as "postmodernity." However, modernity, characterized by the false idea that change and innovation are good in themselves, and that industrial and economic growth, technological progress and so on would give rise to ever greater human perfection, is the stage of the cosmic cycle that sets the conditions that make it possible for basic human delusion and all that developed along with it throughout the cosmic cycle to complete their *reductio ad absurdum,* so that they may be surpassed and the cosmic cycle may come to an end. Therefore, postmodernity must necessarily be a period posterior to the end of the current cosmic cycle, in which the states of consciousness, relational structures and institutions that developed throughout this cosmic cycle have been surpassed and a New Age of Communion, plenitude and harmony has started. As I write these words, it is clear that the old cosmic cycle has not yet ended and the New Age has not yet started, for basic delusion, perceptual fragmentation and instrumentality are still rampant, right wing institutions continue to prevail, the ideals of modernity (such as industrial and economic growth, technological progress, and history as a process of perfecting) continue to be the guiding principles of most of our species, and Communion is far from becoming widespread. Furthermore, the fact that some intellectual circles disenchanted with the ideals of modernity have fancied the current decadence and *reductio ad absurdum* of modernity to be a new period beyond modernity to be called "postmodernity"—even though this period is marked by characteristics distinctive of modernity, others that are characteristic of the decadence of modernity, and some that are clearly a reaction against modernity resulting from the *reductio ad absurdum* of the latter, and even though none of these features could become stable over the centuries (as proven by the fact that, if all continues to be as it is now, our species could possibly disappear from this planet during the current century)—shows that still in our time phases and fashions succeed each other with great momentum, as is characteristic of modernity, which rejects tradition and values innovation and change.

For us to set wholeheartedly to apply the traditional methods for having access to the state of Communion, the generalization of which would mark the starting of the upcoming New Age, it is imperative that a thinking becomes widespread that shows substantiality, plurality and discreteness to be illusions, and that shows concepts, judgments, ideas and ideals not to be absolute insofar as all that may be thought must

necessarily have a *genus proximum* and a *differentia specifica* (or at least the latter) and hence be relative to these. However, the acknowledgment of the relativity of the relative must not leave us without a guiding principle and reference point: it must go along with the acknowledgement of the absoluteness of the true condition of reality that cannot be conceived by thought, and of the fact that the various relative courses of action are not just equal, for among these only the Path that unveils the true condition of reality and then consolidates this unveiling can make our survival possible, endow our lives with true meaning, and give rise to a new era of plenitude, Communion and harmony. I do not know any trend of thought declaring itself "postmodern" that does this, and so I do not know any such trend that can lead us into the truly postmodern New Age of plenitude, peace, harmony and equality in frugality.

An example of a postmodern method that has been mistakenly taken to lead to some kind of spiritual realization, and, furthermore, has been compared to the method of Nagarjuna, is Jacques Derrida's method of deconstruction in literary criticism. Using texts as pretexts, a metaphysical *clôture* that limits human discourse and in particular restricts the concepts applied (being, meaning, presence) in order to think the articulation of a discourse and a related historic totality, is to be questioned, deconstructed and broken. But what is a *clôture*? It is a closure (in the sense of "closing in on the outside") of the *logos* (in a non-Heraclitian sense) within the boundaries of a way of thinking and attributing meaning, which can never be wholly self-sufficient and complete due to the powerful double logic of reversal / displacement and postponement (*déferance*) in *différance*.[115] But what is *différance*? This term was made to differ in spelling but not in pronunciation from the French term *différence* ("difference"), in order to mark a sharp difference of meaning. *Différance* is not merely difference; it is supposed to be that which makes differences possible and which constitutes all signs as signs (i.e., as something that refers to something supposedly different from itself). As de Saussure made it clear, signs "mean" by differing from other signs; however, for Derrida the key point is that they may *differ*, opening a space from that which they represent, and they may also *defer*, opening up a temporal chain, or participating in temporality—a double sense emphasized by Derrida's neologism.[116] According to the French thinker, ontologically speaking the differing and deferring of signs from what they mean, signifies that every sign repeats the creation of space and time, and that *différance* is the ultimate phenomenon: we are told that it is an operation that is not an operation; that it is both active and passive; that it is at once what makes being itself possible and what results from it. Deconstruction is supposed to be achieved through the identification, achieved in the analysis of the manifold levels and articulations of a theory's conceptual and rhetoric framework, of the unjustified binary, black-and-white distinctions that are posited as pseudoabsolute dualities or dichotomies. By these means the essentialist discourse of metaphysics is supposed to be bypassed, if not altogether transcended, and harmful misunderstandings are supposed to be undone (for example, that of ethnology arising as a science critique of ethnocentrism yet accepting in its discourse and in its denunciation of ethnocentrism the premises of ethnocentrism, and not being critique of itself). Deconstruction is always textual deconstruction, but this does not set a limit to it insofar as Derrida insisted that language was always written language: aware that at least since Plato and until the French Structuralists writing has been seen as a degeneration of oral language, Derrida set out to demolish the contraposition between oral and written language and the valorization of the former and contempt toward the latter, intending to show at once that this contrast is an unjustified black-and-white distortion, and

that written language has a much greater extension than generally assumed—as well as being beginningless (a view that, unlike often believed, is rooted to a greater extent in genetics and cybernetics than it is in a radicalization of the hermeneutical tradition—which, Derrida has hinted, remains attached to the old metaphysics of presence, and of which mainly the Nietzschian subspecies seems to have influenced Derrida[117]).

Robert Magliola[a] has claimed Derrida's *différance* is the same as Nagarjuna's *shunyata*. Though it is clear that all differences may be said to result from negations (suffice with remembering Spinoza's *Omnis determinatio negatio est*), and *différance* understood as the movement according to which language, or any code, any system of forwarding in general 'historically' constitutes itself as a tissue of differences, may be though to amount to the movement at the root of negation(s), elsewhere[b] I have shown *shunyata*, when viewed as an *experience* occurring on the Path and in particular in the practice of the *Madhyamaka-Prasangika* school, of Ch'an or Zen, or of the Dzogchen teachings, not to be a negation, but a derealization that may take place when we are left with no possibility of conceptualizing reality in terms of any of the extremes in which we usually try to make it fit.[118] It was the lower *Madhyamaka-Swatantrika-Yogachara* school—that of Shantarakshita, Kamalashila and Arya Vimuktasena—which identified *shunyata* with a negation; the *Madhyamika*-Prasangikas objected that this negation was an affirming or implicative negation (Skt., *paryudasapratisedha*; Tib., mayingag[c]) that due to its very nature immediately would give rise to a new assertion, keeping us in the alternation of assertions and negations characteristic of "conventional truth"—a "truth" that pertains to *samsara* and, as it is evident in the etymology of the Sanskrit term for "conventional," which is *samvriti*, rather than a *truth* is an "obscuration to correctness" or a "thoroughly confused" condition.[d119] It was in order to prevent practitioners from dwelling on a negation (or on anything else, for that matter), that the *Prasangika* method used nonaffirming or nonimplicative negations (Skt., *prasajyapratisedha*: Tib., megag[e]) such as the *chatushkoti* or simultaneous negation of all possibilities regarding a topic, which leave nothing standing that we may hold to, but, on the contrary, may induce a derealization and possibly result in the direct realization of the absolute truth—this being the reason why adherents of this system were called "Thoroughly Nonabiding Madhyamikas."[f120] In Tibet, the true, original method and view of the Prasangikas became obscured when, influenced by the mainstream literature on the allegedly imaginary debate of Samye eulogizing the lower *Madhyamaka-Swatantrika-Yogachara* school and demonizing whatever looked similar to the view supposedly defended by the Hwashan Mahayana, Je Tsongkhapa denied Thoroughly Nonabiding Madhyamikas were true Prasangikas, and adopted the *Swatantrika* method of Shantarakshita, Kamalashila and Arya Vimuktasena on the basis of a reformulation of the *shunyata* to be arrived at, giving rise to a misinterpretation of *Prasangika* that viewed *shunyata* as a negation on which the meditator should come to abide, and which was supposed to be a nonaffirming or nonimplicative negation.[121] Finally, it is important to emphasize that, if *shunyata* is not a negation, far less could it be an

[a] Magliola (1984).
[b] Capriles (2005, 2004).
[c] *ma yin dgag*.
[d] Chöphel (2005).
[e] *med dgag*.
[f] Skt., *sarwadharmapratisthanavadin*; Tib., rabtu minepar mawa (*rab tu mi gnas par smra ba*).

absolute negation, for negation is by its nature relative to that which it negates and to the subject that negates it.

Derrida's method of deconstruction has been considered to be similar to Nagarjuna's method of *reductio ad absurdum* (Skt., *prasanga*; Tib., thalgyur[a]), which the originator of the *Madhyamaka* school and his disciple Aryadeva, and later on the *Prasangika* subschool, employed in refuting the basic premises of common sense—which are the basic elements of samsaric experience and which involve such principles as substantiality, independence, causality and space and time—and of metaphysical and religious truths, insofar as these were based on the same premises, and in particular on ideas such as those of essence, duality, identity and so on. Among those who have so viewed Derrida's method, Robert Magliola has asserted that in his destruction of the principle of identity Nagarjuna used the same logical strategy as Derrida, and often the same arguments later used by Derrida[b122] (which has probably *epaté*[c] the French author, who has derided Eastern thought). However, Derrida's method is incomplete, for it deconstructs the principle of identity without destroying that of difference, and by maintaining the latter keeps us indefinitely in the realm of delusorily valued meanings, which as de Saussure made it clear are all based on difference: as David Loy has noted,[d] Derrida "remains in the halfway-house of proliferating 'pure textuality';" he remains stuck in language with its ineluctable duality. Conversely, the *raison d'être* of Nagarjuna's method is to provide us with an opportunity to go beyond all delusorily valued meanings; in fact, Loy was right in noting that deconstruction *à la Nagarjuna* completely dismounts both poles of the conceptual dualities that compose language and condition human experience, as a result of which a radical transformation in one's mode of experiencing the world—or, in the more precise terminology I employ in this book, a going beyond experiencing—might take place, which would constitute an effective release. Derrida's basic error lies in his insistence on conserving difference and in positing *différance* as the most basic truth, for difference only makes sense in terms of its contrast with identity; the very moment identity is negated, provided that this negation is carried out with immaculate logic, difference has been negated by the same stroke. David Loy writes:[e]

> The interdependence of both terms in such dualities implies that the negation of either must also lead to negation of the other. We use "cause-and-effect" to explain the relationships between supposedly discrete things, which means that our concepts of objects and causal relations, being relative to each other, must stand or fall together: if there are no objects, then there can be no causality (as usually understood). We shall see that the same paradox holds true for time: if there is only time, because there are no objects "in" time, then there is *no* time. Each pole deconstructs the other. It is the necessity for this second and reverse movement that Derrida does not see. Expressed in his categories, Derrida, although aware that each term of a duality is the *différance* of the other, does not fully realize how deconstruction one term (transcendental signified, self-presence, reference, etc.) must also transform the other (*différance*, temporization, supplementation, etc.).
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> What is the result of this double-deconstruction of "commonsense" dualities? Derrida's single-deconstruction leads to the "temporary" reversal ... and/or to a discontinuous,

[a] *thal 'gyur*.
[b] Magliola (1984).
[c] Shocked.
[d] Loy (1987), p. 59.
[e] Loy (1987), p. 60.

irruptive "liberation" from reference grounded in the search for unattainable origins, into the dissemination of a free-floating meaning beyond any conceptual *clôture*. For Nagarjuna, this would only be the illusion of liberation, while remaining trapped in a textual "bad infinity" which tends to become increasingly playful.

Loy notes that, since Derrida's deconstruction ends up with difference, it necessarily initiates a new swing of the pendulum of dualistic conceptualization requiring yet another deconstruction effort. Loy notes that this seemingly endless proliferation (or dissemination, which is Derrida's term) is nihilistic if it has no other purpose than to engage in "linguistic free play." However, he believes this nihilistic end might be given a more positive Nietzschian interpretation in that for Nietzsche nihilism opens the way to a necessary revaluation of all values[a] (as will be seen below, in terms of Vattimo's thinking this is a modern reading of Nietzsche, the postmodern reading not involving such revaluation). Harold Coward[b] retorts that Loy is wrong in asserting that to Derrida spiritual freedom lies in the free play of words Nietzsche refers to, for in the French author such freedom is somehow related to silence; he writes:

> In his essay "Cogito and the History of Madness," Derrida says that "silence plays the irreducible role of that that bears and haunts language, outside and *against* which language can emerge... Like nonmeaning silence is the work's limit and profound resource.[c] This line of thought is given a spiritual resonance when in "Edmond Jabès and the Question of the Book" Derrida observes that the God of the Jews constantly questions out of silence—that meaning emerges not in propositions, but in the silences, the blanks...[d] Rather than being the result of the cessation of language, Derrida's silence is the origin, the source of all speaking, and yet a source that locates itself in the quiet between the sounds of God's voice and the spaces between the letters of his writing. And it is here, not in Nietzsche's free play of words (as suggested by Loy earlier) that Derrida seems to locate spiritual freedom. Language both ours and God's originates not in his speaking but in his keeping still—it "starts with the stifling of his voice and the dissimilation of its face. This difference, this negativity in God is our freedom, the transcendence and the verb which can relocate the purity of their negative origin only in the possibility of the Question.[e] This theme reappears in Derrida's "Violence and Metaphysics: An Essay on the Thought of Emmanuel Levinas"...[f] Indeed in a very recent essay, "Comment ne pas parler: Dénégations," Derrida deals head on with negative theology as an interpretation of silence.[g]

Of course, silence makes the difference with regard to words and letters and is a necessary contrast for these to have their meanings, and we may opt for silence just as we may opt for text, word, letter; therefore, if we understand silence to be the space where Derrida places freedom and emancipation, it will be clear that this freedom and emancipation are false insofar as they lie in something that, being *relative* to words and letters, lies within the dualistic trap of *conventional truth* or *samvriti satya* which, as we

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[a] Nietzsche (1967 [e.g., II:9], 1968 [e.g., pp. 55, 674], 1997b [e.g., Preface, p. 4]); Loy (1987), p. 80.
[b] Coward (1990), chapter six, "Derrida and Nagarjuna," pp. 125-146.
[c] "Cogito and the History of Madness." In Derrida (1978), p. 54.
[d] "Edmond Jabès and the Question of the Book." In Derrida (1978), p. 71.
[e] "Edmond Jabès and the Question of the Book." In Derrida (1978), p. 67.
[f] "Violence and Metaphysics: An Essay on the Thought of Emmanuel Levinas." In Derrida (1978) p. 89 *et seq*.
[g] English version (trans. Ken Frieden): "How to Avoid Speaking: Denials." In Budick (1989), pp. 3-70.

have seen, is a thoroughly confused condition involving an obscuration to correctness. It should be clear by now that emancipation, freedom and absolute correctness lie solely in the realization of absolute truth, which takes place only when the delusory valuation of thought comes to an end and thus we cannot grasp at any extreme; in other words, it is realized when we go beyond the duality between texts and textuality, on the one hand, and silence, on the other, in the unveiling of what the Mahayana calls *achintya* or the Unthinkable (which rather than being a mere absence of thought [is] the true nature of both thought and the absence of thought), and which in Derridian language should be called the Unwrittable (which, rather than being a mere absence of text, [is] the true nature of both text and the absence of text).

Harold Coward believes the result of Derridian deconstruction makes people sensible to the interdependent (*pratitya samutpada*) universe and therefore "is in many ways similar to the goal of Nagarjuna's *chatushkoti* or negation of the four extreme views;" however, this could not be farther from the truth, for the universe viewed in terms of interdependences (either *qua* concatenation of the twelve links or *nidana* as in the *Pratyekabuddhayana*, or *qua* simultaneous interdependence, as in the *Madhyamaka* school) constitutes the relative truth, whereas the aim of the *chatushkoti* is to make it impossible for the mind to adhere to any conceptual view, so that relative truth may collapse and absolute truth may have a chance to unveil. This unveiling temporarily puts and end to *samsara* and constitutes an instance of *nirvana*, and hence represents an interruption of interdependent origination *qua* succession of the twelve links or *nidana*, for only in *samsara* there manifests the basic delusion called *avidya* (first of the twelve links), only in *samsara* is there death as such (which together with old age makes up the twelfth and last link, *jaramarana*)—and the same applies to the remaining ten links or nidanas. Likewise, it represents an interruption of simultaneous interdependence, for it temporarily puts an end to the illusion of multiplicity. The point is that realization of the interdependence of relative truth may be *useful* in (though it is certainly not sufficient for) fostering communicative relations and promoting respect, but is utterly different from the realization of absolute truth that disconnects the delusory valuation of thought that is responsible for the illusions of plurality and oneness and in general for all drishtis or viewpoints, and which therefore (is) beyond plurality and interdependence, just as much as it (is) beyond unity and identity, and in general beyond all drishtis or viewpoints. Thus "killing the Greek father, the Platonic *logos*; killing speech until there is a primordial solitude out of which our ethical relationship to the other arises"[a] belongs to relative truth and lies within the ambit of the conventional that, insofar as it involves an obscuration to correctness, is thoroughly confused. Furthermore, as will be shown below, unless it alternates with the state of Communion in which the relative / conventional temporarily dissolves, the realization of interdependence will not give rise to pancommunicative relations and deep-seated respect, for these can only manifest in the state of post-Communion, as a spontaneous result of the realization, in the state of Communion, of the divine, common nature of all entities.

Thus it is not difficult to understand the reasons why absolutely relativistic, nihilistic consequences have been drawn from Derrida's thought. Since Derrida rejects identity but accepts difference, and he never even entertained the idea that true liberation may lie in going beyond difference and identity upon the self-liberation of delusorily

[a] Derrida (1978), "Violence and Metaphysics: An Essay on the Thought of Emmanuel Levinas," pp. 89 et seq.

valued thought, Derrida-inspired social constructivists and those that make of "political correctness" their guiding principle and reference point, on the grounds that all ways of thinking and all ways of acting result from differences that must be equally honored and respected, often make a point of considering all human individuals and all ideologies as equally worthy of respect and acceptance—which implies we should place on the same footing a hatred-blinded Bin Laden and a *bodhisattva* like the Dalai Lama, those who promote abuse and intolerance and those who promote respect and tolerance, Nazis and engaged Buddhists, those who are eager to cut environmental regulations and invade other peoples in order to control their resources, and those who work for survival and for the establishment of the upcoming New Age. However, if we honored those who are eager to trample on the respect of differences, a Bin Laden might obtain power and kill all of those who refuse to convert to his faith, or the extremist ruling elite of the single superpower might continue to receive the votes of most US citizens and thus lead to its consummation the process of destruction of our planet.[123]

According to many social constructivists, just to place on equal footing, in a non-Western civilization of culture, the prevailing scientific views and the traditional views of that civilization or culture, is a progressive action, for then neither set of views will be able to claim absolute truth and so in the long run tradition will end up losing its grip over the civilization or culture in question. However, this very hope shows that those who promote this approach do not really place on equal footing the scientific views prevailing in their own cultural settings and the traditional views of other civilizations or cultures; that they believe the former to be superior to the latter and wish the former may come to replace what they view as "inferior" or "backward" traditional views. The point is that the moral imperative that minority cultures be respected cannot beget true respect, for it would amount to conserving the delusory valuation of differences and then concealing it with the cloak of respect toward differences—which would have the same inverted effect that, as the *Tao-Te-Ching* showed, has had the enforcement of morality and so on. The only way to develop genuine, deep-seated respect, both toward the cultural differences that deserve respect and toward the natural environment and other human beings, is by gaining access to the state of Communion that temporarily puts an end to the delusory valuation of differences, for then, in the post-Communion state, one would maintain an underlying awareness of the illusoriness of all differences, as well as of the fact that the essents resulting from these differences are aspects of the single, universal divine body which unveiled in the state of Communion—and which is naturally celebrated and venerated in the state of post-Communion. The paradox is that while on the one hand only the prevalence of Communion can result in a genuine, deep-seated respect of cultural and other differences, on the other hand the prevalence of Communion would in the long run give rise to a homogenization of humankind.[124]

For Derrida the whole, which he calls the sign, is a whole of language, for language is the only reality he accepts: it is assumed to refer to itself rather than to an extratextual reality. On the other hand, for the Madhyamikas the whole involves all that language interprets and that is not language, as well as the whole of language; insofar as, there being nothing larger to include it and nothing that it may exclude, the whole cannot have either *genus proximum* or *differentia specifica*, it cannot be thought; and since the true nature of all parts of this whole is that of the unthinkable whole, their true nature can only be realized in a nonconceptual unconcealment.[125] Whereas this is for Nagarjuna the absolute truth, insofar as language can never manifest the whole of the sign, for Derrida there is no

absolute truth. Coward proposes a critique of Nagarjuna from the standpoint of Derrida and tells us that Derrida would object Nagarjuna's complete separation of language from the true condition of reality on the grounds that it privileges one opposite or extreme over the other, and hence is just as unsatisfactory as the extreme logocentric position that identifies speech with truth. He writes:[a]

> Nagarjuna... takes the inherent nature of language in its subject-object conceptualizing of all experience to be the major obstacle to the experience of the real. Whereas for Derrida language is the means for the experience of the real, for Nagarjuna language as *vikalpa* or imaginary construction is the obstacle (*avidya*) to be removed, if the real is to be seen.

This is a complete misunderstanding of *Madhyamaka*, which does not deem the obstacle that prevents the unconcealment of the true condition of reality to be language: the obstacle is the illusory manifestation of the subject (the grasper) and the object (the grasped), and our unrelenting grasping at concepts (i.e., what here I have been calling the delusory valuation of concepts), and the problem is not that language conceptualizes all experience in terms of subject and object, for this implies the erroneous assumption that human experience is not structured in terms of the illusory subject-object schism, of the illusion of space and time as separate, objective dimensions, of the illusion of substantiality, of the illusion of causality, etc., and that then, *a posteriori*, language conceptualizes this experience in terms of subject and object, etc. On the contrary, it is *our experience* that conceals the true condition of reality, for it is conditioned by the delusory valuation of the three types of concepts—the delusory valuation of the supersubtle thought-structure known as the threefold thought-structure, which as we have seen repeatedly is a super-subtle concept, giving rise to the delusive subject-object schism that pervades samsaric experience. Language does reflect the imaginary constructions manifesting in our experience as a result of the delusory valuation of the three types of thoughts, and in this sense it has been said to be *vikalpa*, but this does not at all mean that Nagarjuna ever claimed language to be separate from the true condition of reality: as we have seen, the map language draws is part of the unthinkable, indivisible territory of the given, which involves no differences, and so the true condition of reality is also the true condition of language; it is the delusory valuation of the map that is responsible for all illusory differences—including the one between territory and map. Coward also says Nagarjuna identified silence with *shunyata*, which is not at all the case; even if by silence we understood the silence of the mind, this silence would be the condition the Dzogchen teachings call kunzhi or base-of-all, which is neither the experience of *shunyata*, nor the absolute truth posited by Nagarjuna: the error of identifying silence as a trait of absolute reality is extraneous to Buddhism and proper to a Hindu *muni sadhu* who remain silent because "the absolute does not speak."[126] Hence the arguments on the basis of which Coward says Derrida would have retorted that it is his own system that does not privilege an extreme over the other, and that it is Nagarjuna who is missing the middle path and hence is a suitable candidate for deconstruction, rather than being Nagarjuna's arguments, are extremely coarse misinterpretations of the arguments of Nagarjuna.

David Loy says that Nagarjuna intends *shunyata* to be a soteriological therapy rather than an ultimate truth or ontological category, and that emptiness, the relativity of all

[a] Coward (1990), p. 138.

things, is itself relative (and the ultimate truth, like the conventional, is devoid of independent being). Loy is right in this, for, contrarily to Tsongkhapa's interpretation, the absolute truth is not *shunyata* appearing as object to a subject; however, we cannot infer from it that for Nagarjuna there is no absolute truth: the great Indian Master posited an absolute truth (Skt., *paramarthasatya*; Tib., döndam dempa[a]), which may be arrived at when the mind can no longer adhere to any conceptual extreme (i.e., to any concept, for all concepts are extremes: hence the name *Madhyamaka*), *provided that the true condition of all phenomena* (Skt., *dharmata*; Tib., chönyi[b]) *becomes patent*—which can only take place beyond the subject-object duality. Loy is right that this ultimate truth, like the conventional, is *devoid of being*, for, as we have seen throughout this book, *being* is the most basic phenomenon of human delusion: *qua* Base, ultimate truth is devoid of being insofar as being is a delusion that does not correspond to the true nature of all essents, which is what I am calling the ultimate truth *qua* Base; *qua* Path and *qua* Fruit, ultimate truth is devoid of being *in a different sense as well*, for in the condition of ultimate truth *qua* Path and Fruit the delusive phenomenon of being simply does not manifest. Furthermore, in itself this absolute truth is not an ontological category, for categories are creations of thought; however, when absolute truth is referred to by language in the state of relative truth, there arises a relative representation of absolute truth, which is what I call a "metaontological category." Finally, though Loy is right in saying that all phenomena, including words, are *tathata* or thatness, and hence there is no discontinuity between language and what it interprets, he failed to note that the point in *Zen* dialogues is to "pull the carpet from under the mind's feet" so that, in the impossibility of adhering to any concept, the *dharmata* may become patent beyond all conceptually-tinged perception. He also failed to note that, as we have seen, in fully Awake Ones words and thoughts manifest beyond delusory valuation, *qua* so-called other-directed assertions (and the same may occur in really advanced Dzogchen practitioners), and that otherwise Shakyamuni could not have spoken the sutras—or, since he spoke them, he would not have been fully Awake.

The core of the matter is that whoever is affected by the delusory valuation of thought will necessarily experience the constructions of thought as ultimately real, and hence if she or he engages in deconstruction *à la Derrida*, this process would have to be endless, for the result of every stage of deconstruction will be a construction suitable for deconstruction, and at no point in this process will she or he arrive at the state of *aletheia* in which the constructions of thought are not experienced as ultimately real. Since the delusion to be overcome involves taking the *constructed* (Pali, *sankhata*; Skt., *samskrita*; Tib., düje[c]) as *given* (Pali, *asankhata*; Skt., *asamskrita*; Tib., dümaje[d]), this delusion is only overcome in the realization proper to systems like the higher forms of Buddhism, which lies in the *unveiling of the truly given, unborn and unconstructed* (Pali, *asankhata*; Skt., *asamskrita*; Tib., dümaje[e]). Therefore, Nagarjuna would be right in seeing Derrida as a suitable candidate for refutation through *reductio ad absurdum*, which is the method that Nagarjuna taught in his Sutric teachings (as different from his Tantric teachings and his Dzogchen teachings,[127] in which he taught more powerful methods) in order to draw the

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[a] *don dam bdem pa*.
[b] *chos nyid*.
[c] *'dus byas.*
[d] *'dus ma byas*.
[e] *'dus ma byas*.

veil concealing the *given, unborn and unconstructed*. Loy is thus right in asserting that Derrida's critique of Western philosophy fails only in that it does not go far enough, and that the way to lead it to completion is found in Nagarjuna.[a][128]

The advent of postmodernity as I understand the term—as the end of the present cosmic cycle and the advent of the upcoming New Age—depends on the generalization of the practice of the Paths of Awakening that can effectively help restore Communion and make it widespread. Among such Paths, the Buddhist one responds best to the spirit or our time, for, among other things: (1) it was one of the first two religions to reject the caste system which is the backbone of Hinduism (which the Indo-Europeans imposed after their conquest of India in order to maintain their power and privileges) and to ban the ritual suicide (*sati*) of widows, and the first to admit women into the practice of the Path of Awakening;[129] (2) it never posited a God or soul; (3) it consistently deconstructs metaphysical and religious fictions, and (4) it asks us to believe only that which, after investigation, we have ourselves tested and found reasonable, and that is for our own good and for that of others. The *Kalama Sutra* (belonging to the First Promulgation or *dharmachakra*) tells us:

> Do not believe in the strength of traditions, however much they may have been honored for many generations and in many places; do not believe anything because many people speak of it; do not believe in the power of sages of old times; do not believe that which you yourselves have imagined, thinking that a god has inspired you. Believe nothing that depends solely on the authority of your teachers or priests. After investigation, believe that which you yourselves have tested and found reasonable, and that is for your good and that of others.

Above, two of the supposed similarities some authors have perceived between Nagarjuna and Derrida were discussed; another apparent similarity between Buddhism, on the one hand, and Derrida and other so-called "postmodern" thinkers, on the other, lies in the fact that Buddhism asserts the human subject (and, in the case of higher Buddhist systems, even the mental subject) to be an illusion that must dissolve for the true condition of reality to be realized—which has been perceived as being alike to the assertion that postmodernity represents the death of the subject. Derrida, in particular, has noted that his deconstruction of the claims of objectivity goes hand in hand with the deconstruction of subjectivity,[b] for just as claims to objective truth are a narrative that must be dispelled, so too is subjectivity a myth that as such is to be deconstructed. In a later work,[c] the French author goes so far as to criticize the narratives of freedom and democracy on the grounds that they imply the emancipation of a Subject (in this case a "people"), and to claim that this appeal to the "metaphysics of Subjectivity" puts these narratives on a par with fascism, insofar as fascism, as represented by Martin Heidegger, also appeals to a Subject, which in this case is the supposed "Spirit of the West." However, Derrida's deconstruction of the subject involves the same limitations that were pointed out in the discussion of general Derridian deconstruction: they lead toward difference, which, in the thought of Derrida, is prior to the subject, but lack the potentiality to lead, as Nagarjuna's *reductio ad absurdum*,

[a] Loy (1987).
[b] Derrida (1967). Heartfield (2002).
[c] Derrida (1991). Heartfield (2002).

to the *effective dissolution of the appearance of there being a subject* (an appearance that may be disassembled into the illusion that the "subject" understood *qua* body-speech-mind complex is a self-existent, substantial individual; the illusion that the mental subject produced by the delusory valuation of the "threefold thought-structure" is a self-existent soul or mind; and several other ones[a]). Only if understood as the Dionysian dissolution of the illusion of there being a self-existent subject in the manifestation of the state of Communion—in which there is no illusion of selfhood, of separation (difference), of duality or of plurality, and in which interpretations in terms of thoughts do not manifest—will the death of the subject mark the start of the genuine postmodernity corresponding to the upcoming New Age. Though in post-Communion the illusory subject manifests anew, the feeling of apparitionality and the erosion of the third sense *avidya* / marigpa has in the Dzogchen teachings proper to post-Communion no longer allows us to fully take to be absolutely or inherently true.

Louis Althusser, who taught at the École Normale Supérieure in the same period as Foucault and Derrida, set out to reinterpret Marx in terms of Lévi-Strauss, giving rise to a Structuralist reading that emphasized the "scientific" Marx and rejected the humanist Marx. Althusser radicalized the idea that the subject is socially bound and does not exist before society, by arguing that "ideology has the function of 'constituting' concrete individuals as subjects:"[b] rather than being the creator of ideology, the Subject that is fancied to be the author of its own destiny is an illusion manifesting as an effect of ideology, and rather than being the author and protagonist of history, the Subject is at once an effect and a support of the structures and relations of the social formation. This appears to coincide with Derrida's doing away, by one and the same stroke, with the subject of emancipation in the narratives of freedom and democracy, and the spirit of the West in Nazi-Heideggerianism—as well as with the stances of other "postmodern" thinkers according to whom history does not have the human subject as its protagonist. At first sight this idea may seem similar to the Buddhist view according to which there is no truly existing self, and even the mental subject is not a substantial existent but a spurious appearance that, because of the delusory valuation of the threefold thought-structure, arises with each and every cognition and immediately dissolves, or to the Buddhist aim of achieving the dissolution in Awakening of both the illusion of a self and the mental subject that seems to be separate and different from its object.[130] However, the view of history without a subject does not involve the understanding that *on all levels of reality* the self is no more than an illusion, or, even less so, that the illusion in question must dissolve in Communion for history to reach its end together with the present cosmic cycle and for the upcoming New Age to start.

Another apparent coincidence between Buddhism and "postmodern" thinking lies in the fact that, on the one hand, Gianni Vattimo reiterated Nietzsche's idea that all values must be surpassed, which he radicalized in order to make sure that surpassing the old values will not amount to the creation of new values, and on the other hand Buddhism makes it clear that full Awakening involves the surpassing of all values in a condition in which they are no longer needed, for the individual can no longer do harm and, on the contrary, spontaneously benefits all beings. However, the surpassing of all values that Nietzsche posited and that Vattimo radicalized does not at all correspond to Awakening,

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[a] For a list of several such illusions, cf. Capriles (1986).

[b] "Ideología y aparatos ideológicos del Estado." In Althusser (1981), pp. 97-141. English version in Žižek (Ed., 1994), pp. 129 *et seq*. For a general discussion of the subject cf. Heartfield (2002).

and does not result in doing no harm and spontaneously benefiting all beings (Nietzsche himself considered that the collapse of values could either represent *a problem* or *a solution to the problems humankind faces in modern times*, according to the attitude individuals adopted in face of it). Let us take a closer look at Nietzsche's views on nihilism and the "postmo" interpretation Gianni Vattimo makes of them.

Nietzsche asserted the need for a secure foundation for thought and cultural practice to be the root cause of decadence in modernity. Christianity gives meaning to human life by positing supposedly objective grounds of value beyond the human individual in the form of God the Father, the divine source and legislator of value, the spider of finality and morality which is supposed to exist behind the great net and web of causality, of which Nietzsche wrote, "there is no eternal reason-spider and reason-cobweb."[a] In its turn, metaphysics is mainly a compound of Christianity and Platonism positing a "true world"—a metaphysical world that, like Plato's *eidos*, lies behind this physical world of mere appearances, in relation to which the latter has little value.[131] Christianity and metaphysics make up Nietzsche's first form of nihilism, which the German philologist-philosopher called "religious nihilism" and which carries within itself the seed of the forms of nihilism and the decadence that are to follow; at its heart are the longing for a rational justification of life and the corresponding notion of a foundation (which Nietzsche deemed to be of Socratic origin[132]), which by seeing life as being in need of justification makes a negative judgment on life—and which is at work both in the moral Christian interpretation of the world and in the modernist ideology of progress. The moral Christian and metaphysical Platonic interpretations of the world carry in themselves the seeds of their own destruction, to a great extent because one of their main values is Truth, and when the quest for Truth and the pursuit of Knowledge are applied to these two interpretations of the world, at some point they will be revealed to be untrue: the pursuit of "Truth" leads to the truth that there is no "Truth," and the pursuit of "Knowledge" leads to knowledge that there is no "True Reality" in the Platonic sense, no "Kingdom of God" and not even God: all that was formerly viewed as transcendent sources of value beyond the human individual is discovered to be but a myth. This is the "Death of God," which implies the death of a world-view and of the whole set of values of all kinds that were inherent in that world-view, and which announces the advent of the Age of Nihilism, in which the term nihilism has a new sense: it is the disease characteristic of an age of cultural barrenness arising from this loss of belief, which Nietzsche himself did not welcome insofar as he foresaw that one of its consequences would be that all that we regard as human civilization and culture, all that we hold as most worthy and valuable and that is a source of human self-esteem, may very easily be destroyed by an extremely brutal and animal-like age—which might end up giving rise to a catastrophe in what concerns truly human existence. Nietzsche wrote:[b133]

> What I relate is the history of the next two centuries. I describe what is coming, what can no longer come differently: the advent of nihilism... For some time now our whole European culture has been moving as toward a catastrophe, with a tortured tension that is growing from decade to decade: restlessly, violently, headlong, like a river that wants to reach the end...

[a] Nietzsche (undated 2), section 48.
[b] Nietzsche (1968), p. 3.

This, which is characteristic of late modernity, is according to Nietzsche the second stage of nihilism, which may be called radical nihilism, which is usually a social fact related with the decay of a civilization, and which Vattimo and other so-called "postmodern" thinkers assert to be the condition pertaining to the present stage of humankind, in which individuals may find themselves incapable to find valid criteria for choosing one value, truth or course of action over another. Radical nihilism may be faced either passively or actively: if we face it passively we become apathetic and depressed due to lack of a sense of meaning, values and so on; however, if we face it actively, as Nietzsche proposed we do, we carry out "the radical repudiation of value, meaning and desirability"[a] and set out to destroy all values, including the ones traditionally attached to God, the supposedly "true world" and metaphysics itself—such as truth, compassion, humility, pity, and even the very distinction between good and evil (which fosters the absolute relativism criticized in the discussion the concept of "politically correct"). According to Vattimo's Nietzsche, if humankind faced this stage of nihilism actively, beginning in Nietzsche's time and for a couple of centuries, nihilism would radicalize itself—which would lead to the third stage of nihilism, which would be that of "accomplished" or "complete" nihilism, and which would be finally attained when no values whatever remained, for it would consist in the completion of the process of destruction of all values.

Vattimo sees Nietzsche's critique of truth as a strategy of nihilist radicalization that at once dissolves the belief in truth and the notion of an origin. In "On Truth and Lie in a Nonmoral Sense," Nietzsche presents as metaphors what most people so far have taken to be truths:[b] rather than knowing things in themselves as they truly are, we know them through a series of metaphorizations—from thing-in-itself to sense-data, to mental image, to word, to mediation in a cultural sphere of meaning, and back to reference to the thing. Each transformation is a metaphor of what it transforms, without relatedness to an origin or foundation; there are only metaphoric transformations. In this way, what are normally taken to be truths are shown to be errors, or rather results of processes of erring—which is very similar to the way Mahayana Buddhism views them.[134] However, Nietzsche does not seem to contemplate a "real Truth" that would lie in Seeing through the errors hitherto taken as truths—such as the Heraclitian *aletheia* as understood in previous chapters of this book, which, rather than lying in the experience of a delusorily valued concept that we wrongly take to be absolutely true (as is the case with the pseudo-truths accepted by metaphysics, religion or common sense, regardless of whether they are understood as *adæquatio rei et intellectus*, as *clara et distincta perception* or whatever), lies in the spontaneous liberation of delusory valued concepts, which shows them to be mere fictions, and which can only be achieved by treading the Path of Awakening in the context of a true wisdom tradition. Failure to acknowledge this "real Truth," as in the case of Vattimo, can but give rise to a most harmful type of nihilism, which would doom humankind to despair and ultimately self-destruction.

As is so often the case in Nietzsche, he shares a basic view of Buddhism—in this case, that metaphysical and religious fictions must be seen for what they are and left behind—but draws from it a series of conclusions absolutely contrary to Buddhism and proper to the most inflated ego, which are harmful to both the individual and the species.

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[a] Nietzsche (1968), p. 7.
[b] Nietzsche (undated 1). This paper remained unpublished for a long time.

The above-mentioned rejection of pity, compassion and humility manifests as the most extreme selfishness and arrogance, which are evident in many of Nietzsche's leitmotifs, including his pseudoaristocratic, elitist contempt for the "rabble"[a][135] (which seems to constitute his Jungian shadow), the tone and the terms in which the traits that would supposedly characterize the *Übermensch* are proclaimed, the contempt for the values, virtues and the "feminine ideals of Christianity," etc. Furthermore, the merely intellectual rejection of the distinction between good and evil by human beings who, rather than finding themselves in the state of Communion beyond ego-delusion, are possessed by egotism and the evil tendencies resulting from the development of the Jungian shadow as explained in a previous chapter, is simply a recipe for evil. These and other of Nietzsche's scandalous views seem to be symptoms of a basic tension resulting from the contradiction between, on the one hand, the assertion of the need to get rid of the illusion of ego in Dionysian Communion and the concomitant negation of the ego's supposedly true existence, and on the other, the manifestation of the most inflated ego possible, which is patent in the delirious statements of the most extreme arrogance that run throughout his writings. I believe this contradiction may be a result of having superficial glimpses of nonego without the due preparation, which makes the subsequent manifestation of ego believe itself superior to all other egos insofar as "it has attained nonego" (roughly like the massive ego-inflation that, according to Wilber's mistaken view, would supposedly be experienced by individuals at the magical stage if they experienced the transpersonal realms[b])—and I also believe the contradiction in question to be an essential element of his madness and of the fact that this madness ended up in a *cul-de-sac* (independently of the role his syphilis may have had in the organic changes related to his psychotic derealization).

Gianni Vattimo[c] claims the diverse theories of postmodernism only gain clarity and rigor when situated in relation to the philosophies of Nietzsche and Heidegger,[136] and in particular to the nihilistic aspects of their thought, and to this aim he identifies two types of reading of Nietzsche's nihilism:

(1) One that is modern and proper to the Enlightenment (in the sense of the modern European belief that reason and education will result in individual and social perfection) insofar as it regards history as lineal and as leading to a specific outcome—namely the surpassing of nihilism in the attainment of accomplished or complete nihilism. According to this interpretation, the surpassing of all traditional, transcendent values in accomplished or complete nihilism would paradoxically result in a wholly new era in which nihilism could be left behind and new categories of valuation would be actively created which would be immanent and apply exclusively to this world, and which would be wholly affirmative and free from nihilism. Since this reading involves harboring hopes with regard to the advent of a condition that it will lead to a regeneration of humankind, Vattimo sees it as involving the narrative of progress *qua* constant creation of the new and overcoming of the old, and *qua* process leading to a future triumph and perfecting of reason in an idealized condition that he views as being suspiciously similar to the Enlightenment, for there is a tendency to conceive it as illumined by a rationality that could well be viewed as an origin providing a secure ground or foundation (as we have seen, Vattimo considers this longing

[a] Nietzsche (undated 2).
[b] Wilber (2000a), p. 15.
[c] Vattimo (1988).

for a secure ground or foundation to be precisely what is coming to an end in postmodernity, and Nietzsche saw it as the first stage of nihilism, source of all subsequent stages). **See where to insert this: Nietzsche —to whom the divorce between human begins and nature was the "human degeneration—seems to have intuited that history developed like a process of *reductio ad absurdum*, for he asserted nihilism to advance toward an extreme at which it could be surpassed, and insisted that the human—or, in the macho terminology of his time, "man"—was "something that must be surpassed." (Perhaps not even here but in discussion of reductio; perhaps here; perhaps in Low's reference to surpassing nihilism... or wherever.)**

(2) One that is postmodern in that it does not foresee a salvation resulting from the end of linear history, which includes his own reading of Nietzsche and which he views as the correct interpretation of the latter's nihilism insofar as the Prussian author responded to the decadence of modernity by rejecting the category of overcoming along with the ideal of the origin understood as ground or foundation. This view calls for discarding what Lyotard called "metanarratives"[a] (including all interpretations that endow history with meaning—such as for example the view of human evolution and history expounded in this book), for rejecting "modern" views, for abandoning hope, and for dissolving (or deconstructing) the construction of the origin as ground.

In order to bring out the "postmodern" elements of Nietzsche's though, Vattimo analyzes his views on history, which he sees as contributing to a philosophy appropriate for the postmodern age in which history is supposed to have ended (and which he believes to be the present period).[b] In *Human, All Too Human*,[c] concerned with the decadence of modernity and how the ensuing cultural ills might be cured, Nietzsche problematizes the concept of "overcoming" that is essential to what Vattimo views as the modernist interpretation of his theory of nihilism. Since Vattimo does not consider overcoming modernity to be a viable solution, for the concept of "overcoming" is to him thoroughly modernist and concomitant with the idea of a progressive return to the origin, he insists nihilism cannot be "overcome" by an overcoming; what can *actually* happen is that modernity dissolves through a radicalization of its tendencies in radical nihilism. In fact, in contrast to the modernist interpretations, which posit a purely affirmative state to be achieved after the overcoming of nihilism, Vattimo presents Nietzsche as stopping, in some sense, with accomplished nihilism, rather than positing an overcoming of nihilism beyond it. Or, more precisely, he interprets Nietzsche's overcoming of nihilism as not being really a stage different from that of complete nihilism, which may lie beyond it. For Vattimo, once the highest values have been devalued, we cannot posit new values that would in any sense be more authentic than the ones we have deposed, and once we have lost belief in the "true" world, this world cannot simply take its place with an equal sense of reality. This is so because the old, transcendent values, and in particular the sense of ultimate reality we had associated with the belief in a *true* world, worked as foundations, and hence we cannot pose new categories of value without realizing that they are just as empty as those we have deposed. Therefore Vattimo's Nietzsche does *not* contemplate a simple overcoming of nihilism as a revaluation of values resting on secure foundations; insofar as nihilism is *the radical lack of a foundation*, complete nihilism cannot be overcome (in the sense of going

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[a] Lyotard (1994).
[b] Vattimo (1988).
[c] Nietzsche (1986).

beyond it): the overcoming of nihilism consists in the overcoming of the desire to overcome nihilism itself. While we may in a sense be stuck with a complete nihilism, this nihilism is not one of despair and life-negation, but of joyous affirmation: the "philosophy of morning."[a]

The idea that, once we have lost belief in the "true" world, this world cannot simply take its place with an equal sense of reality, seems to imply a derealization of our experience of "this world." On the basis of Nietzsche's statement in the *Genealogy of Morals*[b] according to which there are no facts, but only interpretations, Vattimo tells us:[c]

> Nihilism means in Nietzsche "de-valorization of the supreme values" and fabulation of the world: there are no facts, only interpretations, and this is also an interpretation.

What I am calling "derealization of this world" must be explained in relation to the stages of Communion and post-Communion, and their preamble. (1) According to the gradual Mahayana, before we have access to the state that I am referring to by the term "Communion" and that manifests for the first time in the Third Path / first level, we may experience fear of voidness, which is overcome in the stage of the Second Path known as "the tolerance of birthlessness." This implies that already in the Second Path we experience some degree of derealization of both ourselves and the world. (2) When the state of Communion manifests, marking the transition to the Third Path / first level, our sense of reality and our values completely dissolve; however, this state does not in any sense involve fabulation of the world, for the experience of the world as fable is a form of perception conditioned by an interpretation, but Communion is utterly beyond interpretations and perception. (3) Except in the case of those who have reached final Awakening, the state of Communion is always followed by a state of post-Communion in which, as a natural after-effect of Communion, reality is perceived to some extent as apparition-like, illusion-like or fabulous. Therefore, Vattimo's term "fabulation of the world" may seem to refer to this condition. However, the experience of the world as apparition-like, illusion-like and fabulous can only result from the manifestation of the state of Communion through the practices of a Path of Awakening, or from putting into practice traditional practices of the Path of Awakening such as that of the illusory body or gyulü[d], that of conscious dreaming or milam[e], etc. (which may also be used to boost the feeling of apparitionality that manifests spontaneously in post-Communion); since Vattimo does not view what he refers to by the term we are considering as being the outcome of any spiritual practice, it is clear that what he announced is no more than a figment of his own wishful thinking.[137]

Since in its turn the state of Communion involves the absence of all values and ideals, it may seem to coincide with the final result of the process of active destruction of all values advocated by Nietzsche. However, this state, (1) being unproduced and beyond the cause-effect relation, cannot result from a process of active destruction; (2) as stressed above, it can only result from the practice of the teachings of a Path of Awakening, to which Vattimo makes no reference whatsoever; (3) (being) a condition of perfection that

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[a] Vattimo (1988), p. 171.
[b] Nietzsche (1999).
[c] Vattimo (1995), p. 50.
[d] *sgyu lus*.
[e] *rmi lam*.

becomes widespread after the end of history and of the time cycle itself, it involves both the overcoming of modernity and the idea of an end that Vattimo rejects, as well as the recovery of the origin and secure foundation—which in this case is immanent, as in the "modern" reading of Nietzsche—with regard to which, according to Vattimo, we should give up all longing. It is true that insofar as the state of Communion involves the absence of all values and ideals, traditional Western philosophy would view it as a nihilist condition, just as it would view the fact that in that state no desire to create values or ideals manifests, as the absence of any desire of overcoming nihilism— just as in Vattimo's postmodern reading of Nietzsche's nihilism. However, as we have seen repeatedly, except in the case of those who have attained irreversible Awakening, the state of Communion is always followed by that of post-Communion,[138] and in the latter, though we do *not* set out to actively produce new values, in the long run moral, political, social, economic and cultural values naturally manifest—which are initially implicit, but which, as degeneration develops, become explicit. Furthermore, unlike the values of European religion and metaphysics in the two first millennia CE, those that spontaneously manifest in the state of post-Communion are not be based on religious or metaphysical fictions, but result from turning the spontaneously wholesome patterns of behavior proper to the state of Communion (which as such are part of what the *Tao-Te-Ching* called the *te* of the *tao*) into moral imperatives to be observed, and from the need to maintain the natural order of the cosmos—and, moreover, they correspond to the values implicit in the utopias that were conceived in the modern age. This was the case with the values that arose in the post-Communion state in the past primordial age[139] and which continued to be harbored by many later hunters-fishers-gatherers and even some horticulturalists, and this will no doubt be the case with the ones that will arise in the post-Communion state during the next primordial era. Though originally the value enthroned as supreme and as conferring meaning to human existence is the quest for Awakening, with the development of degeneration this value is confined to the elite that practices the Paths of Awakening.[140]

Vattimo would be right with regard to the fact that the disappearance of all values will not give rise to new values, only in the case of the few special individuals who, after dedicating themselves exclusively to the practice of the Path of Awakening over a period of many years, come to maintain the state of Communion uninterruptedly—and yet if these individuals come to teach, just as Shakyamuni did, they will set up values for sentient beings to uphold. In relation to Vattimo's calling the philosophy that does not call for the overcoming of nihilism the "philosophy of morning," it must be noted that, though the succession of the Communion state that involves not values whatsoever and the post-Communion state in which values are implicit (etc.) is not a philosophy, it is characteristic of "morning" in that it manifests in the earliest stages of all cosmic cycles;[141] therefore, though it would be improper to refer to this as a philosophy of morning, it may be properly called the "condition of morning."

In order to deter his readers from deriving from his unrelenting demolition of religious and metaphysical fictions a senseless nihilism or an absolute relativism like the ones that are the ultimate consequence of various trends of "postmodern" thought, including Vattimo's, the unequalled spiritual Master and philosopher Nagarjuna wrote in the *Rajaparikatharatnamala*:[a][142]

[a] Nagarjuna & Seventh Dalai Lama (1975).

Upon seeing, thus, how effects arise
from causes, one affirms what appears
in the conventionalities of the world
and does not accept nihilism...

A follower of nonexistence suffers bad migrations,
but happy ones accrue to the followers of existence;
one who knows what is correct and true does not rely
on dualism and thus becomes liberated.

Despite the fact that conventional truth (*samvriti satya*) is a thoroughly confused condition involving an obscuration to correctness, so long as we find ourselves within its sphere we experience pleasure and pain, happiness and sadness, and so do those whom we affect through our actions so long as they are within its sphere; furthermore, since we are bound to experience the karmic effects of our actions, if these are evil we will suffer the ensuing consequences, and if they are good we will enjoy their results. Though the Buddhist ideal consists in going beyond the dualistic sphere of conventional truth into the nondual sphere of absolute truth (*paramartha satya*), so long as we find ourselves within the sphere of conventional truth we will be wise if we affirm what appears in the latter and, rather than giving ourselves to wayward courses of behavior, we respect conventional values, most carefully observing the law of cause and effect, and reject nihilism. It was for these reasons that the great Master Padmasambhava of Oddiyana said, "Though my Vision is ampler than the sky, my observation of the law of cause and effect is finer than sand." And it was also because of this that Atisha's guru from Suvarnadwipa (i.e., from Sumatra) known as Dharmakirti or Dharmapala told his excellent disciple: "So long as there is the slightest grasping [in you], you must carefully observe the law of cause and effect." Postmodern nihilism as emphasized by Vattimo, and Derrida-influenced social constructivism insofar as it posits the subject as the "meaning of meaning" without emphasizing the need to dissolve the subject in the state of Communion, may justify and foster instrumental attitudes. Hence the historical and philosophical link between "postmodern" constructivism and fascism pointed out by Gene Edward Veith[a] might be no coincidence, for both reject objective truth and yet do not provide us with the means for going beyond subjective illusions; both assert that there is no essential human nature or inherent human rights and yet do not contemplate an unveiling of the *tao*, the concealment of which gave rise to these fictitious ideas and values; and both celebrate the substitution of power for truth (though this is far from applying to the whole of social constructivism). At any rate, it is a fact that forefathers of postmodern ideology, such as Martin Heidegger, and actual postmodern ideologists such as Derrida's close associate Paul de Mann, have been deeply committed fascists.

According to Vattimo, modernity is characterized by the concept of progress, which rests on a unilinear view of history: if we posit a goal towards which mankind is supposed to progress—such as the European Enlightenment's goal of emancipation—we view the whole of history in relation to this goal; hence we have but one view of history, and this view is constructed as a line along which the whole of society moves through time. Furthermore, in modernity, being "modern" or "new" is itself a value, for it is seen as overcoming and leaving behind the old, and thus moving further along the fine towards the

[a] Veith (1993).

desired goal. According to Vattimo, modernity comes to an end when we are no longer able to view history as unilinear, which in his view represents the end of history inherent in the notion of postmodernity,[a] and which is achieved by increased awareness of a plurality of views of history, partly due to the media explosion (which he interprets contrarily to Adorno and Horkheimer,[b] who believed that it would lead to a fully homogenized society, and in a sense to Baudrillard as well[143])—but, we must add, in general as an effect of the process of globalization (which was intended to homogenize the values of humankind on the basis of those of capitalism and of the US in order to exacerbate domination and exploitation, but which may have had the opposite result, as the projects of delusion are subject to the law of inverted effect). Vattimo sees this "end of history" as something that has already been reached in our time, which in his view is the postmodern age; however, all human beings in the prevalent civilization have a sense of moving ahead in lineal history, and so long as this is so it would be ridiculous to claim that history has come to an end: this end will come to pass when the very sense of progressing in time be surpassed in the timelessness of the state of Communion, while in the state of post-Communion the modern myth of eternal progress is replaced by the archaic myth of the eternal return (neither conceived *à la pythagoricienne*, nor *à la Heines*, nor *à la Nietzsche*, but understood in a sense much nearer to the one Mircea Eliade gave the term)[c144]—so that history be overcome in an ahistorical condition featuring the essential characteristics of the Primordial Age.

The European Enlightenment replaced the myth of a perfect condition preceding history with the new myth of progress *qua* the means for building the future paradise of fully developed modernity. This new myth was then contested by the Romantics, who idealized the origins, often placing myth above reason. Now that the myth of progress has been unmasked, revealed as such and reduced to absurdity by the ecological crisis that had not yet developed in the Romantic period, our task does not lie in contrasting myth and reason, romantically glorifying the former and deriding the latter, for myth and reason are successive stages in the development of delusion. A meta-ontological hermeneutics of the development of delusion and an archeology of the degenerative evolution of human thought shows that in an initial stage the development of the analog thinking of primary process gave rise to the distortion derived from the delusory valuation of what we call "mythic thinking;" then, in an ulterior stage, the development of the digital thinking of secondary process which we wrongly call "rational" gave rise to the distortion derived from the delusory valuation of this kind of thinking, which *pretends* not to be mythic. It was at this stage that a Pascal was able to say that *le cœur a ses raisons que la raison ne connaît pas* (the heart has its reasons, which reason does not know), but it would be more precise to say that the digital rationality of secondary process, upon becoming filter and judge of all experience, is unable to understand or even perceive the analog rationality of primary process—even though the computations of the former always take place over and against the set of relations (structure) and the dynamics (function) established by the computations of the latter. This is why the digital rationality of secondary process also functions in terms of myths, such as that of eternal progress—though we are compelled to

[a] Vattimo (1986), p. 22.
[b] Adorno & Horkheimer (1997).
[c] Eliade (1959). A view similar to the one I propose here was advanced in Armand (1998), which the author asked me to present at a National Conference on Philosophy (Venezuela).

become of bad faith with regard to this fact so that we ourselves and others may adhere to these myths in the belief that, rather than myths, they are faithful descriptions of the objective structure of reality as revealed by "reason"—and why the replacement of the myth of eternal progress by that of eternal return would not represent a regression from "reason" to "myth." Furthermore, since progress on the Path of Awakening requires the undermining of self-deceit, and since this progress also implies become ever more aware of illusion as such while in the relational state, our myths—including metanarratives such as the one expounded here—must be acknowledged to be such rather than being disguised as "objective scientific descriptions."

At any rate, romantic regress is impossible, for, as we have seen, insofar as primary process contemplates no negatives, there is no way to put a lid on degenerative evolution through intentional, conscious actions: the basic delusion that has developed throughout the time cycle must achieve its *reductio ad absurdum* so that, if properly catalyzed by wisdom, it may spontaneously break together with history and time itself. (As noted in the Nyingmapa Buddhist teachings of Tibet and as seen in the preceding chapter, our sense of temporality results from the vibratory activity in the organism at the root of delusory valuation; this activity progressively increases its rate throughout the cosmic cycle, until at the end of the cycle it becomes so fast that it collapses, together with our experience of time and with the delusory valuation of thought.[a]) Only at that point will we enter true postmodernity, which will result from surpassing all that developed in the process of human evolution and history culminating in modernity.

Thus it is clear that true postmodernity would imply the end of history, not in the Fukuyamian sense of "completion of the ideological evolution of humankind and disappearance of alternatives to capitalist, economic liberalism (in which "liberalism" has the sense of 'free competition'[145])," nor in any of the three senses contemplated by Baudrillard,[b] but in the sense announced by Marcuse in a conference at the Free University of Berlin in July 1967 in which he asserted the new possibilities of human society and its environment to be no longer conceivable as a continuation of the old ones, for they cannot be represented in the same historical continuum insofar as they presuppose a radical rupture with this historical continuum. In fact, the end of history must involve the surpassing of the human condition that was conceived in different terms by Nietzsche, Aurobindo, Teilhard, and Foucault, among others,[146] as well as the end of time announced by the Nyingmapa Buddhist teachings of Tibet and a tradition associated with the *Kalachakra Tantra*.[c] There can be no surpassing of what Foucault called the modern *episteme* unless there is a surpassing of that of which this *episteme* is the last stage: the human condition as constituted (in Mayda Hočevar's image) once the mask of Apollo covered the facelessness of Dionysus.[147]

I have expounded a metanarrative endowing human evolution and history with meaning, which furthermore contradicts the modern, scientist views that (despite their contempt for modernity) lie at the back of the minds of the advocates of postmodernity; I have been referring to a condition of Communion and to a New Age characterized by Meaning, plenitude, peace, harmony and equality in frugality, which might be viewed both

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[a] Padmasambhava (1977), Introduction, section "The Experience of Time," Italian: pp. 17-19.
[b] Baudrillard (1992). In relation to this notion cf. also (1994b, 1995, 1996a, 1997a, 1997b, 1998a, 1998b).
[c] Padmasambhava (1977); the tradition related to the *Kalachakra Tantra* is the same one discussed in Tarthang Tulku (1977a).

as an end and as return to the origin; I have claimed that averting the destruction of our species and generating the positive features that would characterize the upcoming New Age depend on Communion becoming widespread; I have asserted that so long as we are not in the state of Communion we need values—and in general I have laid down a worldview contradicting many of the shared bases of "postmo" thought, and having an overly mystical and mythic character. A great deal of this would shock, not only advocates of postmodernity who, like Vattimo, call for the definitive extinction of all values, but also other left-wing postmodern theorists sharing my emphasis on egalitarianism and on the need for a radical transformation of society, such as Jameson,[a] Harvey,[b] Laclau & Mouffe,[c] perhaps to some extent Negri & Hardt,[d] etc. And the emphasis I place on mysticism has also shocked professors of philosophy adhering to the mainstream European philosophical tradition (which is paradoxical, for a chief modern Western philosopher like Hegel posited as the paramount attainment of the human spirit the self-recognition of self-consciousness in nature—which is a mystical experience, the only difference between it and the one I am concerned with here being that the one Hegel posited is spurious and unauthentic, whereas the one I am dealing with is true and authentic—and premodern Western philosophers such as Nicholas of Cusa,[148] Plotinus and the other Neo-Platonists, Augustine of Hippo, Boethius, Pseudo-Dionysius, Anselm of Canterbury, members of the School of Chartres, John of Fidanza [Bonaventure], Meister Eckhart and quite a few others posited as the highest spiritual attainment what were overly explained to be mystical intuitions beyond the principle of noncontradiction[149]).

Having criticized Vattimo's views, I must note that I was very pleasantly surprised because of his human quality when I met him in 2006 at the II International Forum of Philosophy of Venezuela. In fact, rather than being an exalted, bellicose character full of hubris and with a sense of superiority, as one perceives Nietzsche to be from reading his works, he is one of the kindest and mildest characters I have ever met in the universe of academic philosophy. Furthermore, rather than, with Nietzsche, attacking the "feminine values of Christianity," he declares himself to be a "Catocommunist"—an Italian term that combines "Catholic" with "Communist." Our meeting was for me quite pleasant indeed.

We have seen that many elements of pseudopostmodern thought *may seem to be similar* to aspects of the true postmodern condition that will come after the end of the cycle, for the condition in question will involve: the death of the subject (in the state of Communion); the derealization of metaphysical and religious fictions, and not only of these fictions, but also of the fiction constituted by our perception of "this world" of immediate experience as self-existent and concrete, giving rise to something similar to Vattimo's "fabulation of the world" (in the state of post-Communion); and a surpassing of history, time and so on. Likewise, we have seen that some have mistakenly perceived coincidences between elements of pseudopostmodern thought and aspects of systems such as Buddhism, which are among the principal means to achieve the transition to the authentically postmodern age: the Derridian method of textual deconstruction has been mistakenly identified with Nagarjuna's method of *reductio ad absurdum*, Derrida's *différance* has been taken to be the same as *shunyata*, and so on. All of these apparent coincidences may

[a] For an example of Jameson's thought, cf. Jameson (1991).
[b] For an example of Harvey's thought, cf. Harvey (1990).
[c] For an example of the thought of Laclau and Mouche, cf. Laclau & Mouffe (2001).
[d] I have in mind Hardt & Negri (2001, 2004).

have been the result of "postmodern" thinkers having had an intuition of the needs of the present historical moment without having gone beyond all that must be surpassed (or, at least, being familiar with the wisdom-traditions that could help us go beyond all that must be surpassed), and while being conditioned by the mood of the present decadence and *reductio ad absurdum* of modernity—all of which would have caused them to wrongly interpreted the needs in question in terms of their own beliefs and prejudices. As a result of this, the thinking that goes under the label "postmodern" is a caricature, a grotesque mockery, of the thinking our time requires.

Modern thinkers developed what Lyotard called metanarratives (comprehensive world views endowing human existence and history with meaning), which as we have seen were mythic yet were believed to be objective descriptions of all walks of human life and evolution, as well as of all aspects of the universe and so on, achieved by unfailing reason. Since all such systems were produced by individuals belonging to the culture that had come to prevail over the rest of cultures, and which had given rise to modernity, which it took to be the summit of a supposed process of perfecting, their claims to objectivity and universality conjugated with the arrogance of the belief in the indisputably superiority of the Western modernity they represented—which *in itself* did violence to the members of other cultures, and, furthermore, was often used to justify the use of coarser kinds of violence against members of those cultures. However, all such systems proved wrong when their predictions failed to be fulfilled and occurrences contrary to what they had forecast came to pass, by the same stroke refuting the belief in the superiority of modernity and of the culture that gave rise to it, and the central metaphysical fictions of modern philosophy—such as the human subject *qua* Cartesian *cogito*, which was shown to be socially and linguistically decentered and fragmented rather than centered or unified—and thus removing the foundations of the project of modernity. Therefore, many of those who advocated "postmodernity" concluded that reason could not explain everything and should acknowledge its own limits—which they wrongly took to mean that in our time we had to resist the temptation of producing totalizing, universalizing, legitimating theories, and instead set out to develop fragmentary microtheories or micropolitical studies favoring multiplicity, plurality, fragmentation, and indeterminacy, and not pretending to have a legitimating function.[150] Likewise, they assumed that rather than producing "metanarratives" involving claims to objective truth, they should show the utmost respect toward "local narratives," or stories about reality that "work" for particular communities, but have no validity whatsoever beyond those communities.

However, the failure of the grand systems of modernity and the violence they did to groups other than the one to which the creators of such systems pertained, rather than lying in the fact that they were all-embracing explanations of reality, was due to the fact that they were produced by inherently arrogant ego, fragmentary perception and instrumental reason, and rather than being acknowledged to be myths, they were taken to be objective, universal truths perfectly matching and exhausting their objects—all of which is a manifestation and development of the basic human delusion that gave rise to the current ecological crisis and that was reduced to absurdity by the crisis in question. If no interpretation can be true or correspond to reality, for so-called reality is all about interpretation, and all interpretations are narratives or stories, then what really matters is whether a given narrative or story produces good or bad results—and thus we must determine what is it that makes narratives or stories to produce good results. Some of the conditions for this to be so is that the narrative or story be acknowledged to be a mere narrative or story—for then it is likely to

give rise to a playful attitude rather than producing the fixed ideas at the root of violence toward others—and that they promote Communion and all that issues from it—such as respect toward the natural order and other human beings, contentment, frugality, peace and so on. Wayward metanarratives that are not acknowledged to be mere stories but are seen either as objective truth or as the commands of God or the like, may allow a Bin Laden to subdue ecologists and seekers of Awakening and force them to become fundamentalist Wahabite Muslims, or provide a justification for the single superpower to invade whichever peoples it may find fit, and to do away with environmental restraints and thus accelerate the self-destruction of our species.

The above explains why the great systems (or metanarratives if we prefer) that should give rise to the true Postmodern Age must result from the manifestation of the Self-*qua*-Path (or, ideally, of the Self-*qua*-Fruit), and as such arise from the global, all-embracing awareness that puts an end to fragmentation, from the Communion that puts and end to instrumentality, and from the surpassing of delusory valuation that shows that no interpretation of reality (including the one provided by such systems) can perfectly correspond to it or exhaust it. This means that they will be anti-systems in the sense of being acknowledged to be myths leading beyond the belief that interpretations, either systemic or fragmentary, may correspond precisely to what they interpret, and thus work as nails that are functional in extracting previous nails but which are not left *in situ*.[151] Furthermore, such antisystems must make it clear that it is imperative to surpass all that developed throughout the cosmic cycle and that achieved its *reductio ad absurdum* in the current crisis; that it is necessary to make the state of Communion become ubiquitous; that it is indispensable for us to get rid of all the institutions, modes of rationality and so on that developed throughout the cycle until our time; that it is crucial to explain the way in which delusion works and hence what is the necessary dynamics of the Path that to be tread in order to uproot it; and so on.[152] Such views may be seen as postmodern insofar as it they would be re-editions of the most ancient views of history known to humankind; as truly postmodern insofar as they can give rise to the true postmodernity of the upcoming New Age, and as anti-modern insofar as they see the evolutionary and historical process as being characterized by degeneration rather than progress. (And if such views were nonetheless to be considered modern, then also Nietzsche's view of the surpassing of humankind in the advent of the *Übermensch* should be considered modern, for it implies the transition to an ideal condition at the end of human evolution, and is also much older than modernity—though not as old as the degenerative view that I develop in this book.[153]) On the contrary, fragmentary treatises that fail to do what the systems entertained here are supposed to do, and which, rather than leading us beyond fashions and back into the customs and rituals of "eternal return," eulogize the adoption of new pseudopostmodern, decadent, nihilist fashions, can only lead us further on the path toward destruction.

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FOR THE BIBLIOGRAPHY ON HEIDEGGER AND EASTERN THOUGHT (FROM SAVIANI, CARLO, 1998, SPANISH 2004)

SEE VOLUME I OF THIS BOOK

[1] As will the shown below in the regular text, Antonio Gramsci wrote: "In reality science is also a superstructure, an ideology." (Cited in an e-article by Gustavo Fernandez Colon that circulated through email in the context of the dialogue between Alex Fergusson and Rigoberto Lanz concerning the "Misión Ciencia" created by the Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.)

[2] A perfect *adæquatio* or matching is impossible insofar as, as shown in vol. I of this book, conceptual maps are digital, whereas the territory they interpret is analog (the discrepancy between these two being aptly illustrated by the relationships between a digital photograph, which is discontinuous, and what it represents, which is continuous and to which therefore it cannot correspond: if the number of dpis is extremely high, one may get the illusion that is looks roughly alike, but as soon as one zooms in into the picture all one sees is a combination of squares of different colors having no resemblance whatsoever with reality), and insofar as from different viewpoints different maps are equally valid—and for the same reason equally incapable of perfect correspondence with what they represent. However, the problem arises when the fragmentary outlooks the Buddha represented with the fable of the men with the elephant and the image of the frog in the well takes its perceptions to fit the undivided, holistic territory they interpret—and in general when we confuse the map with the territory of take it to perfectly correspond to it, as happens when the basic human delusion that the Buddha called *avidya* and that Heraclitus called *lethe* is active. Cf. also Capriles (2004) and other works. (As we all know, Foucault [1976, 1978] and Deleuze [1980] assert the sciences to be *more than ideologies*: to be the very matrix that makes possible and justifies the existence of power.)

[3] As stated in a note to the Introduction in vol. I of this book, since the initial use of the term in Sorel (2a Ed. 1922), myth was for our author a network of meanings and a tool of elucidation helping us to perceive our own history. In particular, Sorel's "theory of social myths" establishes that myth is a human-originated belief born out of a psychological shock and—insofar as it must move human beings to action on the basis of an exemplary genealogy—often related to the question of origins. Rather than remitting to the past as the primitivists believed, it points to the eternal. It consists in a set, not of concepts or ideas, but of motive images, and hence the point is nor whether or not it does respond to whatever happened, but that it must give rise, intuitively and prereflexively, to the whole of the feelings susceptible of giving rise to an envisaged action: it has to do with what will be produced and what one intends to produce, even though it is not a precise prediction. If it is fruitful, if it responds to the collective aspirations, if it is accepted by the whole of society or at least by a sizeable part of it, the myth renews itself on the basis of itself: its socialization corresponds to its consecration. Hence myth is beyond such disjunctives as true-false, good-evil, just-unjust: either it is fruitful, generating a socio-psychological activity, or it is not fruitful and does not generate such activity. This, among other things, is why Sorel denounces the implicit reductionism of Marxism and its pretension of scientifically predicting the future, yet rather than refuting the system in question, limits himself to asserting that it pretends itself scientific insofar as science is the pivotal myth of its time: Marxism is mythic precisely to the extent to which it pretends itself scientific. This is why Sorel (1906) asserts that the true problem does not lie in conceiving precepts or even examples, but in setting into action the forces susceptible of causing action to adjust itself to the precepts and examples. Unlike Pareto, Sorel does not view myth as an irrational belief we must rid ourselves of, but as a motor or instigator to be implemented—so long as the myth be "authentic" in the sense of leading to a desirable state of affairs. This is why Sorel (1908), just as this book, insists that "progress" is nothing but a myth of the bourgeoisie—which, it is now clear, has led us the brink of self-destruction.

The myth I present in the three volumes of this book, and particularly in vol. III, *Beyond History*, is intended as a means, not only toward the transformation of society, but also toward going beyond "adhering" (to myths and all sorts of constructions of thought) in the sense of "being conditioned by"—and thus toward achieving freedom with regard to that which causes myths to have a motive power. In other words, just like Ashvagosha advocated the use of language as a means toward going beyond language, in this book I am laying out a myth that I intend to ultimately cause myths to lose their motive power. In fact, according to the view of human evolution and history presented in vol. III, our species went from a condition in which human beings were not conditioned by myths and thought constructions in general, to one in which they were so conditioned and hence wholesome myths were employed. Finally, from the latter it moved to a condition in which harmful myths were adopted that pretended to be objective, "scientific" descriptions of reality rather than myths.

(It must be noted that my coincidence with Sorel in the above regards should not be taken to imply I accept his extreme apology of violence.)

[4] My use of this term does not imply the thesis according to which self-deceit is the function of a *topos* alien to consciousness (as in the first Freudian topic) o to the ego (as in the second Freudian topic). Cf. vol. II of this book.

[5] In general, those traditions that, like the Dionysian, have been connected to Mount Kailash: Indian Shaivism, Persian Zurvanism (and later on Ismailism), Chinese Taoism, Himalayan Bön and, later on, Tantric Buddhism and Buddhist Dzogchen, etc. A more in-depth discussion was undertaken in a note to vol. II of this book, and will be undertaken far more thoroughly in Capriles (work in progress 3). Alain Daniélou (1987), for his part, has shown the identity between the Dionysian tradition, Shaivism, and the Egyptian cult of Osiris.

[6] Hesiod reformed ancient tradition by introducing, between the Bronze and Iron Ages, an "Age of Heroes," which according to Wilamowitz and Reintzenenstein (Fernández Colón [2005]) was added by the Greek poet in order to insert in this tradition "the prestigious works of Homeric heroes." Heraclitus repeatedly referred to the *aion*, but extant fragments do not refer to eras. Plato (*Politician* 268d-273c) reinvented the tradition even more radically, though Châtelet (1965, pp. 225-239) inferred a degenerative philosophy by combining these fragments with *Republic*, Book VIII. The Stoics, who acknowledge that they took their view from Heraclitus, seem to express the latter's conception in full, for their description of the successive eras is in perfect agreement with the most archaic versions of the degenerative view of human spiritual, social and cultural evolution and history—such as that of the Bönpos (Reynolds, John, 1989) and that of the Taoists (which, however, does not divide the time cycle in four or three eras in the manner of the various extant Indian and Greek traditions. In fact, as will be shown below in the regular text (check whether or not I cited ISE or reworded the same ideas), they described the primordial era as being free from all social divisions, property, individual family, and so on (check in ISE what else must be said).

[7] The fourfold division of the cycle was originally carried out on the basis of the four-sided dice used in ancient India, in which a perfect (*kritya*) game was four (hence the name *krityayuga*), the second best game was three (hence the name *tretayuga*), the next was two (hence the name *dwaparayuga*) and the lowest possible was one, which represented a "black" or "dark" game (hence the name "black / dark age" or *kaliyuga*). In their turn, those traditions that referred to the primordial age as *satyayuga*, rather than taking the term *satya* or truth in the sense of *adæquatio rei et intellectus*, or in that of *perceptio clara et distincta*, etc., used it in the sense of "*absence* of the delusion (i.e., of what the Buddha Shakyamuni called *avidya* and which Heraclitus called *lethe*) that causes us to experience the put as given, the relative as absolute, the dependent as independent, the apparent as inherent, the conditioned as unconditioned, etc." In other words, the term refers to the Heraclitian *aletheia* (but not as Heidegger misunderstood Heraclitus' usage of the term).

Finally, the tradition that posits three eras refers to the second as *dharmayuga* because in this era, despite the fact that the true condition of reality has been covered up by delusion, the spontaneous perfection of the natural order has not been forgotten (so to day) to such a degree as to cause human beings to rebel against their circumstances. Though this makes them experience less conflict than they would experience were they to rebel, it also makes possible the development of inequalities and injustices. Finally, in the *kaliyuga* rebellion proliferates, causing conflict and suffering, but also opening the way for the subversion of the established social, economic, political, cultural and spiritual order.

According to one Hindu interpretation (Rohde [Ed., 1999]; Liscano [1993]; Fernández Colón [2005]), the *krityayuga* lasts 1,728,000 years, the tretayuga lasts 1,296,000 years, the dwaparayuga lasts 864,000 years and the kaliyuga lasts 432,000 years. According to another (or the same?) view, a kalpa lasts 4,320 millions years. However, these numbers are quite irrelevant. **CHECK INTERNET FOR THE KALACHAKRA CHRONOLOGY.**

[8] According to the pre-Buddhist Himalayan spiritual system known as Bön (and to some extent in agreement with Marxism), it was the introduction of private property that gave rise to political power, for property gave raise to chaotic struggles that could only be suppressed when all recognized a sovereign. The first sovereign being of divine origin, at some point he nonetheless abused power, and so a privileged ruling cast or social class arose, giving rise to social stratification; then, the need to protect both private property and the class system gave rise a further development of political power, wielded by the privileged sectors

of society. This dynamics gave rise to the oppression and exploitation of groups of human beings by other groups of human beings. Cf. Reynolds (1989).

[9] According to Diogenes Laërtius (1972-1979, L, IV, 9), also Heraclitus would have sustained the circular vision we are concerned with, asserting that the world arises from fire and returns to fire according to fixed cycles and for the whole of eternity.

[10] Some interpret the *Book of Daniel* as reflecting traditions assimilated during the captivity in Babylon, but most secular interpreters believe that references in the *Book of Daniel* reflect the persecutions of Israel by the Seleucid king Antiochus IV Epiphanes (175–164 BC), and dating its composition to that period, deem that Eastern influences were received through the Persians.

[11] From the sixties onwards, books on the subject—using abundant data from the UNESCO yearbooks and the results of research by the most serious institutions, and, in some cases, endorsed by some of the most renowned scientists—proliferated, allowing growing numbers of people to become aware of the extremely dangerous situation we face, and to search for an alternative to the project at its root. The work that rang the alarm bell may have been Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* (1962), which was followed by F. Osborn's *The Looted Planet*, W. Vogt's *Path of Survival*, Barry Weissberg's *The Politics of Ecology*, the MIT's *The Limits to Growth* (which in the long run may have undermined the ecological movement because its predictions failed to materialize), The Ecologist's *A Blueprint for Survival*, Mesarovic-Pestel's *Mankind at the Crossroads*, D. Meadows' *The Global Equilibrium*, Segeberg's *The Ecological Warning*, Philippe Saint-Marc's *Socialization of Nature*, and many other classics.

The emergent awareness of the limits and the dynamics of ecosystem Earth caused some of the clearest thinkers in the West to outline projects for restructuring technology and the sciences. In 1962, Murray Bookchin began publishing the manifold books in which he developed the concept and the ideology of anarcho-ecologism. In the 1970s, the Norwegian thinker Arne Naess produced the concept of deep ecology, which called for a radical restructuring of the whole of human society in order to put an end to all types of exploitation (and which he related to Buddhist thought); Ivan D. Illich advanced most important, similar proposals, which covered manifold disciplines (and which went so far as to put forward a maximum speed of transportation of 10 miles/hour); and E. Fritz Schumacher propounded other most important concepts, such as those of intermediate technology, Buddhist economics and technology with a human face. These trends of thought kept proliferating, giving rise to the manifold works by Hazel Henderson, Walter Weisskopf, Manfred Max-Neef, Fritjof Capra, Brian Tokar and Andrew Dobson, Herman Daly, Nicholas Georgescu-Roegen, Richard England, Frances Moore-Lappé & Joseph Collins, Armory & Hunter Lovings—and, to some extent, also those by Kenneth Boulding and John Galbraith. Lately, the proliferation of works on this line of thought has been so important, that it would be very difficult to elaborate an exhaustive list of them.

In this note I listed some books by their names because, except for those that are quoted in this book, none of them are not included in the Bibliography.

[12] The Millennialist tradition involves an analogy between phylogenesis and ontogenesis in that the condition of plenitude and perfection that manifests at the end of the process is *not* followed by a new process of degeneration.

[13] This symbolism is evidently far more sexist than Eastern ones.

[14] In the works of Taoism of Unorigination or contemplative Taoism in general, and in those by Lao-tzu, in particular, the terms "nothingness" and "nonbeing" (which in this case are the Chinese *wu* and the Japanese *mu*, as different from the Chinese *k'ung* and the Japanese *ku*) refer to the condition that is free from the delusory valuation of the concept of being—or of the concept of nonbeing, for that matter. I find this terminology—which as we have seen exerted an important influence on Martin Heidegger—far less precise than that of the *Madhyamaka* school of Buddhist philosophy, and view this lack of precision—together with Heidegger's lack of a practice of Awakening—as of the main likely causes of the lack of precision in Heidegger's philosophy.

[15] The quotation, from Capriles (2003), is the following:

A delusion is a distorted perception of reality. Someone who, being deluded with regard to the direction of cardinal points, tries to go south, at a given moment could as well discover she or he is going north. As we have seen, this happens all the time in our daily lives, as so often our attempts to get pleasure result in pain, the actions whereby we intend to get happiness give rise to unhappiness, what we do achieve security produces insecurity, and so on and on. In fact, the essential human delusion (*avidya* or marigpa) gives rise to an inverted dynamics that often causes us to achieve with our actions the very opposite of

what we set out to accomplish—which is what a popular twentieth century British-born author called "law of inverted effect" or "reverse law" (Watts, 1959). The great Dzogchen Master Vimalamitra provided us with an excellent example of this law in the *There Sections of the Letters of the Five Spaces*, where he noted that all the happiness of *samsara*, even if it momentarily appears as such, is in reality only suffering, maturing in the same way as the effects of eating an appetizing yet poisonous fruit (Namkhai Norbu, 1999/2001, p. 41): again and again the appetizing aspect of the fruits of *samsara* beguile us into gobbling them, and yet we fail to learn from the ensuing stomachaches. In *The Precious Vase*: *Instructions on the Base of Santi Maha Samgha,* Chögyäl Namkhai Norbu (1999/2001, p. 44) explains the examples with which the *mahasiddha* Sarahapada illustrated this law:

"Not knowing what to accept and what to reject, even though we crave happiness we obtain only sorrow, like a moth that, attracted by a flame dives into it and is burnt alive; or like a bee that, due to its attachment to nectar, sucks a flower and cannot disengage from it, dying trapped inside; or like a deer killed by hunters while it listens to the sound of the flute; like fish that, attached to the taste of the food on the fisherman's hook, die on the hot sand; like an elephant that, craving contact with something cool, goes into a muddy pool and dies because it cannot get out. In fact the *Treasury of the Dohas* (*Do ha mdzod*) says:

"Observe the deeds of the fish, the moth, the elephant, the bee and the deer, [each of which brings about its own suffering through attachment to objects of one of the five senses]! [...]"

From the *Three Sections of the Letters of the Five Spaces* (op. 3: p. 7, 1):

"There is no end to all the various secondary causes, just like following the mirage of a spring of water."

"In fact all the beings that transmigrate through the power of *karma*, whether they are born in the higher or lower states, are in fact beguiled and dominated by the diverse secondary causes so whichever actions they perform become a cause of suffering. They are never content with what they do and there is nothing on which they can really rely..."

[16] I think it is advisable not to try to predict exactly when would the disintegration of human society or the end of human life on our planet take place if current trends were sustained, for so far most such predictions have proved wrong. According to what seem to be the soundest interpretations of the prophesies in the *Kalachakra Tantra* and related traditions, which foretell the advent of a millennium of Awakening, harmony and peace beginning after the *Kalachakra* wars, we are still many decades away from the wars in question, and so these prophesies seem to foresee that human society will not disintegrate, and that human life will not come to an end, during the 2lst century.

The fact that scientific predictions have rarely been fulfilled with precision, is show by the ones made in The Ecologist Editing Team, 1971, which was supported in a document by many of the most notable scientists of the United Kingdom and by organizations such as The Conservation Society, the Henry Doubleday Research Association, The Soil Association, Survival International, and Friends of the Earth. The authors (which included Edward Goldsmith) asserted that:

"After examination of the relevant available information has made us conscious of the extreme gravity of the global situation in our days. However, if we allow prevailing tendencies to persist, the rupture of society and the irreversible destruction of the systems that sustain life on this planet, possibly towards the end of the [twentieth] century, doubtlessly within the lifetimes of our children, will be inevitable."

The same applies to the predictions by Michel Bosquet, who warned over three decades ago that (in Senent, Juan; Saint Marc, Philippe & others [1973]):

"Humankind needed thirty centuries to gather momentum; there are thirty years left to brake before the abyss. "

More pondered, but perhaps still too tight in his dating, German-Ecuadorian deep ecologist Arturo Eichler pointed out in the late 1980s that it would have been an exaggeration to predict the total destruction of the systems that sustain life in the twentieth century, but also asserted that only a total immediate transformation might perhaps make our survival possible beyond the first half of the present century (personal communication).

For his part, Lester Brown, from the Worldwatch Institute in Washington, D.C. (Brown, Lester, 1990), may have also proposed too fixed a threshold when he asserted at the Global Forum on the Environment and Development for Survival that took place in Moscow from January 15-19, 1990 that:

"If we cannot turn around some of the prevailing tendencies in the future, we run the very real risk that environmental degradation may produce economic ruin, as it has already done in parts of Africa, and that the two may begin to feed upon each other, making any future progress extremely difficult... ...by the year 2030, we will either have produced an environmentally sustainable world economic system or we

will have clearly failed and, much before that, environmental degradation and economic ruin, feeding upon each other, will have led to social disintegration. We will do it by 2030 or we will have clearly failed."

Without announcing a "date of doom," in 1998, a group of scientists comprising many of the Nobel prize winners of the planet warned against the irreversible destabilization and destruction of the ecosystem through the greenhouse effect—which, given the ever-increasing heat absorbed by the Pacific Ocean, which then is distributed, has been giving rise to ever more extreme "El Niño" phenomena, which have wreaked havoc around the world. Even James Lovelock, who previously had made fun of ecologists, pointed out that Gaia (the planet considered as a living organism) would be incapable of maintaining its homeostasis (health) and life with an index of human incidence upon its systems such as the one that has characterized recent years and decades. More recently, another conference of climatic experts made even direr warnings.

Though I refuse to make predictions concerning the time at which, if no radical change is achieved, society may be disrupted or humankind destroyed, there is no doubt that the results of our scientific-technological project threaten the continuity of human society and life, and that little time is left for us to make the necessary changes. Therefore it is imperative that we begin working right now toward the spiritual, psychological, epistemological, technological, social, economic and cultural changes that are the condition of possibility of long term survival: only thus will possibly come true the predictions in the *Kalachakra Tantra*, according to which after the final wars of *Kalachakra* humankind will enjoy a millennium of peace and spiritual fulfillment.

[17] Buddhism does not claim that a god created the world in order to fulfill a preconceived purpose. Since the question as to how the world originated and how life manifested is irrelevant for Liberation or Awakening, Shakyamuni remained silent when asked about it (just as he did when asked about other thirteen topics). Furthermore, the question concerning the meaning of life only arises from the standpoint of dualistic delusion, as the latter causes us to feel that we are thrown into a world against our will and forced to have experiences in it, and then makes us ask what is the meaning of being so thrown and so forced. However, upon Awakening we realize a Meaning that is inexpressible and unthinkable: we (are) what is happening, and as we are no longer caught within the boundaries of the dualism of self and other, person and world, experience and recipient of experience, etc., so that we cannot feel different from what is happening, the flow of Time (which I capitalize insofar as here I am referring to it in the context of Total Time-Space-Gnosis-Awareness) is itself absolute, nondual, nonconceptual Meaning—making it impossible for the Awake individual to ask himself questions concerning the purpose or meaning of life.

In this context, it is important to emphasize once more that *samsara* and *nirvana* are two dynamics (in an individual) of the single Base or zhi (*gzhi*) referred to in the Dzogchen teachings, and that both manifest from the same source. In a note to Chapter II we saw that according to the *Kunje Gyälpo* there is no one apart from Samantabhadra, the state of *dharmakaya*, who has created dualism. However, in truth *samsara* arises again and again in our experience (in a way that was described both in Part Two of this book and in Capriles [2004]), and thus the question regarding the origin of *samsara* does not refer to something that happened long ago, but to something that constantly happens again and again as time goes on. At any rate, there being no duality the moment just before the occultation of the true condition of reality and the subsequent arising of *samsara*, it is impossible that at that moment there be an intention, and hence that there be a "reason" for this occultation to occur; therefore, we cannot say that the occultation took place for this or that reason. In fact, the illusion of duality that is the core of *samsara* arises nondually. If, after being possessed by the illusion of duality, we are fortunate enough as to reGnize rigpa and thereby apprehend nondually what at some point had seemed to be a duality, we come to realize the "meaning beyond words" referred to above.

Though we cannot say why *samsara* arises, we can say how it arises: this is what the Dzogchen teachings do when they explain the successive arising of kunzhi (*kun gzhi*) as basic ignorance concerning the true condition of the Base or zhi (*gzhi*), of kunzhi namshe (*kun gzhi rnam shes*) as a readiness to single out forms out of the continuum of sensation that manifests in the state of kunzhi and know them, of nyongmongpachen yikyi namshe (*nyong mongs pa can yid kyi rnam shes*; this is what is called in Sanskrit as *klishtamanovijñana*) as the active core of the passions that are the essence of the realm of sensuality, and of the six sensory consciousnesses as the actual functioning of this realm of *samsara*. For a more detailed explanation of this, see Capriles (2004) (the definitive, corrected version of which will soon be available in print), as well as Capriles (work in progress 4).

[18] A person enjoying high status is not “better off’ than another suffering a low status; if a poverty-stricken person has a greater quantity of so-called “physical” sufferings, a wealthier person certainly has a great deal of so-called “mental” ones—and, moreover, at any moment he or she can have an accident or illness and thus be forced to experience so-called “physical” pain. Furthermore, if we ascend to a higher place because of apparently desirable turns of fortune, when the time comes for the wheel of *samsara* to turn we will experience a far more vertiginous and pronounced fall, since we will plunge from a higher point in the wheel, possibly to the lowest point. And when we face the status represented by the lower part of the wheel, being unaccustomed to them, we will reject them with greater impetus, which will make them ever more unpleasant. This is the reason why Blaise Pascal insisted that the existence of the peasant, for example, is less prone to conflict than that of the sovereign (Pascal [1962]; thought 223):

“The great and the small have the same accidents, the same sorrows and the same passions; however, the former is on the periphery of the wheel, whereas the latter is more near the center and thus is less agitated by the same movements.”

[19] Below I reproduce the whole section from which the quotations in the regular text were taken, so that the reader who has not studied vol. II of this book may place the cited excerpts in context:

In the preceding chapter I referred to Awakening as *absolute sanity* and as *absolute mental health*, and referred to *deluded normality*—in which the greatest part of the time we are successful at eluding the Hell that, as we have seen repeatedly, is the bare experience of being-for-Self and of being-for-others—as *masked insanity*. The point is that normality is characterized by the basic human delusion called *avidya* or marigpa, and delusion is the very opposite of the mental soundness that should be the defining characteristic of sanity and mental health. According to Alfred Korzybski (4th Ed. 5th printing, 1973), sanity lies in the structural fit between our reactions to the world and what is actually going on in the world, whereas insanity would consist in the lack of such fit—which the author in question explained in terms of his renowned map-territory analogy: the map is not the territory but, when correct, it has a structure similar to that of the territory that allows it to be useful in dealing with the latter, and that is at the root of the structural fit that in his view is the index of sanity. However, conceptual maps are digital, whereas the sensory territory is analog, and the digital, being discontinuous, cannot correspond to the analog, which is continuous. In other works[19] I have illustrated this lack of match with a series of examples; here, I believe it may suffice to use that of the mismatch between a digital photograph and the analog reality it is supposed to replicate: though the lack of fit is minimized if the number of dpis is extremely high, even in this case it would suffice to zoom in to see a combination of colored squares bearing no resemblance to the continuous reality photographed. No doubt, in spite of this, digital maps are instrumental to our aims a great deal of the time—yet very often their use causes effects that diametrically contradict those that we intend to produce, being the source of the most extreme lack of fit imaginable between the ones and the others. In fact, as shown in the following chapter of this volume, because of the radical difference between the digital code of the process that in the 1895 *Project for a Scientific Psychology* Freud called secondary (based on the computations of the left cerebral hemisphere) and the analog code of the process he called primary (based on the computations of the right hemisphere), the action of consciousness in terms of the former is very often read invertedly in the latter—which causes it to yield effects diametrically opposed to the ones intended, as is proper to the samsaric “reverse law” or “law of inverted effect” that was briefly reviewed toward the end of the first chapter of this volume.

Furthermore, the exacerbation of the delusion called *avidya* or marigpa, and hence of What *Gestalt* theory calls figure-ground mind and of understanding exclusively in terms of digital secondary process, has caused the figures we single out in the sensory continuum to appear to us as in themselves isolated from the ground, making consciousness unaware of the indivisibility of the analog continuum of the territory and of the interdependence, not only of the singled out figure and the rest of the continuum, but of all *potential* figures among themselves. The result is a lack of overall understanding of the indivisible, analog continuum and network of interdependences that is the universe—which, according to the *Udana* (third book of the *Khuddaka Nikaya* in the Pali Canon, which contains the teachings of the First Promulgation that form the basis of the Hinayana), the Prajñaparamitasutras (Second Promulgation), the philosophy of Nagarjuna (based on the latter sources) and other Buddhist sources and systems, is a central aspect of the basic human delusion called *avidya* or marigpa. K. Venkata Ramanan paraphrases the explanation the *Prajñaparamitashastra*, which the Chinese attribute to Nagarjuna,[19] gives about this essential aspect of delusion:[19]

"We select from out of the presented only the aspects of our interest and neglect the rest; to the rest that is neglected we become first indifferent and then blind; in our blindness, we claim completeness for the aspects we have selected. We seize them as absolute, we cling to them as complete truth... While the intellectual analysis of the presented content into its different aspects is conducive to and necessary for a comprehensive understanding, analysis is miscarried if the fragmentary is mistaken for the complete, the relative is mistaken for the absolute."

In the *Udana* of the First Promulgation, Shakyamuni Buddha illustrated this aspect of the basic human delusion by the story of the six blind men and the elephant, according to which the one who held the elephant's head asserted the object to be like a pot, the one who held the ear said it was like a winnowing fan, and so on:[19] each of them held so firmly to his partial view, taking it to be the exact, absolute view of totality, that they quarreled bitterly, unable to come to an agreement as to the nature of the object before them. The same story is told in the *Tathagatagarbhasutra* of the Third Promulgation, as follows:[19]

"The king assembled many blind men and, [placing them before] an elephant, commanded, "Describe [this object's] particular characteristics." Those among them who felt the elephant's nose said that [the object] resembled an iron hook. Those who felt the eyes said that [it] resembled bowls. Those who felt the ears said [it] resembled winnowing baskets. Those who felt the back said it resembled a sedan chair, and those who felt the tail said it resembled a string. Indeed, though [their respective descriptions responded to the parts of the] elephant [they touched], they were lacking in overall understanding..."

The result of the inverted meaning the contents of digital secondary process have in the analog code of primary process, of the perception of parts of the whole as intrinsically isolated essents and the incapacity of consciousness to apprehend interconnections, and in general of the basic human delusion called *avidya* or marigpa, is the above-mentioned lack of fit between the aims behind our actions and the results these produce. In this regard I wrote elsewhere: **THIS QUOTATION IS REPEATED FROM ABOVE; REFER TO IT RATHER THAN CITE AGAIN.**

A delusion is a distorted perception of reality. Someone who, being deluded with regard to the direction of cardinal points, tries to go south, at a given moment could as well discover she or he is going north. As we have seen, this happens all the time in our daily lives, as so often our attempts to get pleasure result in pain, the actions whereby we intend to get happiness give rise to unhappiness, what we do achieve security produces insecurity, and so on and on. In fact, the essential human delusion (avidya or marigpa) gives rise to an inverted dynamics that often causes us to achieve with our actions the very opposite of what we set out to accomplish—which is what a popular twentieth century British-born author called "law of inverted effect" or "reverse law."[1919] The great Dzogchen Master Vimalamitra provided us with an excellent example of this law in the There Sections of the Letters of the Five Spaces, where he noted that all the happiness of samsara, even if it momentarily appears as such, is in reality only suffering, maturing in the same way as the effects of eating an appetizing yet poisonous fruit:[19] again and again the appetizing aspect of the fruits of samsara beguile us into gobbling them, yet we fail to learn from the ensuing stomachaches. In The Precious Vase: Instructions on the Base of Santi Maha Samgha, Chögyäl Namkhai Norbu explains the examples [in terms of the five senses] with which the mahasiddha Sarahapada illustrated this law:[19]

"Not knowing what to accept and what to reject, even though we crave happiness we obtain only sorrow, like a moth that, attracted by a flame dives into it and is burnt alive; or like a bee that, due to its attachment to nectar, sucks a flower and cannot disengage from it, dying trapped inside; or like a deer killed by hunters while it listens to the sound of the flute; like fish that, attached to the taste of the food on the fisherman's hook, die on the hot sand; like an elephant that, craving contact with something cool, goes into a muddy pool and dies because it cannot get out. In fact the Treasury of the Dohas (Do ha mdzod) says:

"'Observe the deeds of the fish, the moth, the elephant, the bee and the deer, [each of which brings about its own suffering through attachment to objects of one of the five senses]! [...]

"From the Three Sections of the Letters of the Five Spaces (op. 3: p. 7, 1):

"'There is no end to all the various secondary causes, just like following the mirage of a spring of water.

"'In fact all the beings that transmigrate through the power of karma, whether they are born in the higher or lower states, are in fact beguiled and dominated by the diverse secondary causes so whichever actions they perform become a cause of suffering. They are never content with what they do and there is nothing on which they can really rely...'"

Each society has its conventions, which contradict those of many other societies and which are as arbitrary as the latter: while the Arabs see burping after partaking of a meal at someone else's home as a sign of politeness showing one is satisfied, European convention would see the same behavior as a scandalous breach of etiquette. However, the problem does not lie in the difference of conventions, but in the fact that both the Arab and the European, just as all other peoples, mistaking convention (Greek *nomos*) for nature (Greek *physis*) see their own social rules as absolute, universal standards. Far worse, insofar as the followers of each theistic religion take their own faith to be divinely sanctioned, and insofar as the followers of each ideology take their own doctrine to be the only true and/or just one, religious and ideological divergences have for millennia given rise to sheer insane behavior like wars, massacres, crucifixions, lynching and so on. However, in the last centuries things have turned for the worst, for as shown in the vol. III of this book, the currently prevailing ideology, which is that of progress and of science as the bearer of truth, has given rise to courses of behavior that are likely to destroy human society and even put an end to human life on this planet in the course of the present century and which as such are the most insane ever taken by our species.

Thus we can but agree with seventeenth century French thinker Blaise Pascal, who compared the state of mind of normal individuals to a psychological disorder,[19] and with ex-Frankfurt philosopher, social psychologist and New Age forerunner Erich Fromm, who gave to understand that our society as a whole is way far from sanity:[19]

"Just as there is a *folie à deux* there is a *folie à millions*. The fact that millions of people share the same vices does not make these vices virtues, the fact that they share so many errors does not make the errors to be truths, and the fact that millions of people share the same form of mental pathology does not make these people sane."

In fact, deluded normality consists in being well adapted to an extremely deranged society, and as such implies becoming extremely deranged. In its turn, society is deranged because its members are affected by an extreme instance of the basic human delusion called *avidya* or marigpa, which has led them to develop common, clearly insane cultural views and conventions. Roughly twelve centuries before Erich Fromm, Buddhist *Madhyamika-Prasangika* Master and philosopher Chandrakirti related the fable of a king that consulted a famous astrologer, who predicted that a rainfall of "maddening water" would pollute the reservoirs in his kingdom, as a consequence of which all who drank from them would be driven insane. Hence the king warned his ministers and subjects to prepare a protected supply of water and avoid drinking the deranging water. However, the subjects, being less wealthy, exhausted their reserves more rapidly, and soon had to drink contaminated water. Since the king and the ministers behaved quite differently from the subjects who had drunk the maddening water, the latter concluded that the former had become insane. When the ministers used up their reserves, they also had to drink the deranging water—upon which the rest of the subjects thought the ministers had become normal, and all agreed the only one still insane was the king. Thus in order to keep his kingdom and avoid being impeached and put into an asylum, the king had no option but to drink the polluted water.[19]

As implied above, the current mortal ecological crisis we have produced is ample proof that there is a structural lack of fit between our reactions to the world and what is actually going on in the world, for as stated in the excerpt of a book of mine cited above, the realization that we are heading South while intending to go North proves that we are basing ourselves on a delusive perception and therefore that, in terms of criteria such as Korzybski's, we are at the extreme opposite to sanity—which is just what Chandrakirti suggested, what Pascal and Fromm asserted, and what Antipsychiatry turned commonplace.

[20] **The following is the reproduction of a note to vol. I of this book:**

It is not easy to assess the authenticity or unauthenticity of the *Prajñaparamitashastra*. Unlike the texts conforming the *Collection of Madhyamika Reasonings* (Skt. *Yuktikaya*; Tib. *Rigtsog* [*rigs tshogs*] or *Uma rigtsog* [*dbu ma rigs tshogs*]) universally attributed to Nagarjuna, this text posits some autonomous theses and syllogisms, and some of its views seem to some extent similar to those of the Madhyamika Swatantrikas. However, the text in question makes it very clear that whatever an Awake individual posits is posited without what Chandrakirti called "own-mind:" the Awake individual does not believe what He or She says, but says it as an expedient means for leading sentient beings of specific capacities to Awakening. This is a view rejected by the Swatantrikas and accepted both by the Prasangikas and the adherents of the Inner, Subtle Madhyamaka (Tib. Nang trawai uma [*nang phra ba'i dbu ma*]), and in particular by the Mahamadhyamikas. Therefore, we may not conclude the *shastra* was concocted by late followers of the Madhyamika Swatantrika subschool.

Nevertheless, just as Nagarjuna's *Collection of Madhyamika Reasonings* (Skt. *Yuktikaya*; Tib. *Rigtsog* [*rigs-tshogs*] or *Uma rigtsog* [*dbu ma rigs tshogs*]) is seen as the source of Swabhava Shunyata Madhyamaka or Uma Rangtongpa, and as Nagarjuna's *Collection of Eulogies* (Skt., *Stavakaya*; Tib., Tötsog [*bstod tshogs*]) and in particular the *Eulogy to the Expanse of the True Condition* (Skt., *Dharmadhatustava*; Tib., Chöjing Töpa [*chos dbyings bstod pa*]) is seen as the source of the Parashunya Madhyamaka or Uma Zhentongpa, if the *Prajñaparamitashastra* were actually a work by Nagarjuna, it could perhaps be seen as one of the main sources of Madhyamaka Swatantrika—and insofar as it combines autonomous theses and syllogisms with the insistence that no thesis should be clung to, and that Awake Ones posit theses without own-mind, merely as other-directed assertions that may be useful to treaders of the Path, it could be seen also as one of the sources of Mahamadhyamaka. In fact, in this case the *Collection of Madhyamika Reasonings* as it is known and conserved in Tibet would be the source of Prasangika, rather than the source of the whole of Swabhava Shunyata Madhyamaka or Uma Rangtongpa.

Hui-neng's method of interrelated opposites (described in Capriles, 2004 and others of my works), which is at the root of many intellectual skillful means of Ch'an and Zen Buddhism, insofar as it is based on the understanding that Buddhas have no own-mind and all they say are other-directed assertions having the function of leading being to Awakening, would be based, among other sources, both in the *Collection of Madhyamika Reasonings* and in the *Prajñaparamitashastra*.

[21] In Guenther (1984), we are told the tale of the men and the elephant is an ancient Indian story. As remarked in the regular text, to my knowledge it first appeared in written form in the *Tathagatagarbhasutra*. Later, it reappeared in Islamic countries, in texts by the Sufi poets; for example, according to the Hadiqah by Sana'i, just like in the original sutra, the men were blind, while in Rumi's *Mathnavi* (written centuries after the *Hadiqah*) they had no vision problems, but were in the dark (Iqbal [1964]). It must be noted, however, that the fifth man, who mistook the tail for a snake, is not featured in the Sufi version of the story; in fact, I incorporated him into the tale. Recently, the story has been told in Dudjom Rinpoche (1991, vol. I, p. 295), in Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche's oral teachings, in texts dealing with systems theory and also in previous works by the author of this book (cf. Capriles [1986, 1988, 1994], etc.).

[22] This example was used by Alan Watts, from whom I have often borrowed it. Unfortunately I do not remember in which of Watts' books it was used.

[23] There is a direct relation between the ampleness or narrowness of an individual's space-time-knowledge and what Tantrism designates as "energetic-volume-determining-the-scope-of-awareness" (*kundalini* or *thig le*: a concept that was explained in a note the first time the term was used in the regular text, and that was considered in greater detail in the context of the discussion of the *mandala*). In fact, Total Space-Time-Awareness corresponds to what the Dzogchen teachings call "thigle chenpo" or Total Thigle; since, as I have noted elsewhere, the Tibetan term thigle translates both the Sanskrit word *bindu*, meaning "seed" and implying the form of the sphere, and the Sanskrit noun *kundalini*, which I translate as "energetic-volume-determining-the-scope-of-awareness," "total thigle" means both "total sphere" (i.e., total *bindu*) and "total energetic-volume-determining-the-scope-of-awareness" (i.e., total *kundalini*)—which in this case must be understood *qua* Fruit and *qua* Path (which is exactly the same as Dzogchen *qua* Fruit and *qua* Path). (Furthermore, when the energetic-volume-determining-the-scope-of-awareness is very high, bindus or spheres may manifest in the vision of human beings. And, since the term *bindu* also refers to the seed-essence that is the white principle in the male and the red principle in the female, the fact that the same word is used in Tibetan for *bindu* and for *kundalini* is due to the relation between the conservation of the seed-essence and the height of the energetic-volume-determining-the-scope-of-awareness in an individual.)

It may also be useful to relate the Dzogchen term "total sphere" to the statement by the Seraphic Doctor, Saint Bonaventura, that was later reproduced by Blaise Pascal, and which physicist Alain Aspect repeated after his experiments of 1982 at the University of Paris-Sud:

"The universe is an infinite sphere the center of which is everywhere and the periphery of which is nowhere."

[24] In Pascal (1962), the second Noble Truth is correctly described, and just as in the story of the maddening water, is compared to a psychological disorder (the French philosopher-mathematician-optician did not use the name "Noble Truth," nor did he refer to Buddhism, which in his time was reputedly unknown in France.)

[25] So long as Total Space-Time-Awareness is veiled by space-time-knowledge (no matter whether the latter be narrower or wider), a directional consciousness observes, judges and controls behavior. And so long

as a directional consciousness observes, judges and controls behavior, to some degree one is subject to the impeded-centipede effect.

[26] We are told that Prometheus, the mythological character, was imported into Greece from India, where he was called Matariswan (a combination of *matari*, from *matri*, the Sanskrit term for mother, and the Sanskrit verbal root *swas*, meaning to breathe)—sometimes identified with Vayu (personification of wind), sometimes with Agni (personification of fire), sometimes associated with the messenger of Vivaswat, who brings down the hidden fire to the Bhrigus. However, if the Greek myth were truly of Indian origin, it would be pre-Indo-European and would have been lost or banished after the Aryan invasions, for neither in the classical religious texts of the Brahmans nor in the *Puranas* is there any reference to Matariswan *stealing* the fire and being punished—whereas, as shown in the following note, in the Yanomami myth of the origin of fire the latter is stolen (references to Matariswan are found in a few hymns of the Third Book of the *Rig Veda*, as well as in the *Atharva Veda*; later on they are found in the *Kena* [*Talavakara*] and *Isa Upanishads*; then in the *Shatapatha Brahmana*, in the *Mahabharata*, and then in the *Puranas*).

The account of a universal deluge, which in Greece was directly related to the myth of Prometheus, is common to many civilizations and spiritual traditions. There are two Indian versions of the account: in the Brahmanic version the equivalent of the Hebrew Noah, the Greek Deucalion, the Chaldean Khasisatra, etc., is the great *rishi* Manu (the Sanskrit root *man-* refers to the thinking faculty proper to humankind, and Manu's descendents were the manavas, which is the Sanskrit for "humankind"—the adjective "human" being *manushya*); in the version of the *Puranas* the Indian equivalent of these is the King of the Dastas (i.e., the Fisher King). In the Brahmanic version, Manu found, in the water that was brought to him for his ablutions, a small fish who was an *avatara* and who spoke to him, saying, "I will save thee from a flood which shall sweep away all creatures." This fish grew to such a large size that it had to be consigned to the ocean; then he directed Manu to construct a ship and resort to him when the flood should rise. The deluge came, and Manu embarked in the ship; the fish then swam to Manu, who fastened the vessel to the fish's horn, and was conducted to safety. This version of the story first appears in the *Shatapatha Brahmana* (1, 8, 1-6); then it is repeated in the *Mahabharata* (Book XIII, 185, with further mentions in various parts of the epic).

However, the origin of the Indian version of the story is thought to be Dravidian (or possibly even pre-Dravidian). It is a fact that the Dravidians were in close contact with the Elamites and the Sumerians, and in fact the version of the *Puranas*, which is less Aryanized, shows coincidences with both the Babylonian and Biblical versions of the legend that are missing in the version featuring Manu. In Lenormant (2003), we read:

"We must also remark that in the *Puranas* it is no longer Manu Vaivasata that the divine fish saves from the Deluge, but a different personage, the King of the Dastas—i.e., fishers—Satyravata, 'the man who loves justice and truth,' strikingly corresponding to the Chaldean Khasisatra. Nor is the Puranic version of the legend of the Deluge to be despised, though [its written form] be of recent date, and full of fantastic and often puerile details. In certain aspects it is less Aryanized than that of the *Brahmanas* or than that of the *Mahabharata*; and, above all, it gives some circumstances omitted in these earlier versions, which must yet have belonged to the original foundation, since they appear in the Babylonian legend; a circumstance preserved, no doubt, by the oral tradition—popular, and not Brahmanic—with which the *Puranas* are so deeply imbued. This has already been observed by Pictet, who lays due stress on the following passage of the *Bhagavata-Purana*: 'In seven days,' said Vishnu to Satyravata, 'the these worlds shall be submerged.' There is nothing like this either in the *Brahmanas* or in the *Mahabharata*, but in *Genesis* the Lord says to Noah, 'Yet several days and I will cause it to rain upon the earth;' and a little farther we read, 'After seven days the waters of the flood were upon the earth'... Nor must we pay less attention to the directions given by the fish-god to Satyravata for the placing of the sacred Scriptures in a safe place, in order to preserve them from Hayagriva, a marine horse dwelling in the abyss... We recognize in it, under an Indian garb, the very tradition of the interment of the sacred writings at Sippara by Khasisatra, such as we have seen it in the fragment of Berosus."

[27] A Yanomami myth also tells us that their tribe (i.e., humankind, for Yanomami means "human") came into possession of fire by stealing it, and that their people experienced dire consequences from their crime. In Lizot (1985) (I am translating into English from p. 49 of the Spanish Ed.) we read:

"Our ancestors were immortal; they ceased being so when they came into the possession of fire."

As we have seen, references to a time when the human lifespan was limitless are proper to the degenerative view of human evolution and history—to which we find many allusions in Yanomami mythology. According to the Yanomami myth, the immortal being who originally possessed the fire was called Baba; his wife was called Prueheyoma, and they lived in the a country inhabited by the "Waika." The Yanomami, in the guise of birds, went to see Baba and made him laugh, as a result of which the fire he kept hidden in his mouth fell, and so the birds brought it to the top of a tree. Baba was extremely angry and told the Yanomami (*ibidem*):

"—This fire that you just stole from me, this eternal fire, will bring you torments: its smoke will cause you illnesses and will make you die; it will consume your bodies. Your bones will be pulverized (note by the author of this book: the Yanomami cremate their corpses and pulverize the burnt bones, which they then eat). Only I will remain immortal, in the freshness of the water where I am going to live."

Actually, all that threatens the survival of our species has to do with fire: it is the direct cause of the greenhouse effect, of acid rain, of lung cancer in smokers and city dwellers, etc.; nuclear energy is a substitute of fire—and, at any rate, without the use of fire none of the technology that has brought us to the verge of extinction would not have been produced.

[28] Schumacher also wrote (Schumacher, E. Fritz, 1973):

"I think we can already see the conflict of attitudes which will decide our future. On the one side, I see the people who think they can cope with our threefold crisis by the methods current, only more so; I call them the people of the forward stampede. On the other side, there are people in search of a new life-style, who seek to return to certain basic truths about man and his world; I call them home-comers. Let us admit that the people of the forward stampede, like the devil, have all the best tunes or at least the most popular and familiar tunes. You cannot stand still, they say; standing still means going down; you must go forward; there is nothing wrong with modern technology except that it is as yet incomplete; let us complete it."

[29] It is interesting that according to the legend the creator of the Golem was the Maharal of Prague, the famous "supreme rabbi Loeb" (or Leow), who was a close friend of Johannes Kepler—the author of the *Astronomia Nova* who, together with Galileo, was a leading figure in the scientific revolution of the end of the sixteenth and beginning of the seventeenth century CE—as well as of the "dreamer" Frederick of Habsburg. It is also interesting that Descartes—promoter of the technological project of subjugation of Nature—was accused of producing Golems. It has been noted that the Golem constitutes the materialization of the "dream harbored by the Middle Ages".

The myth warns us that if we are to survive we must erase the *aleph* from our technological Golem before it is too late—not in order to do away with technology, but to change its nature, preventing it from becoming a Golem that finally destroys its masters. We have not yet erased the *aleph* because we have fallen asleep: the means of social hypnosis keep us in a trance, helping us avoid the dreadful choice between radical change and extinction. However, in our case there is an element that was not contemplated in the Hebrew tale: the pride we take on having built such a colossal Golem does not allow us to acknowledge that it is about to destroy us, but causes us to keep building it up, telling ourselves that the problems that the Golem has created are due to the fact that it has not been developed sufficiently.

[30] It is an interesting coincidence that, a few decades ago, a so-called "Frankenstein Law" was approved in the U.S., allowing genetic engineers to patent their creations. However, the Golem threatening us with destruction was created long before the appearance of genetic engineering, being developed by philosophers-scientists and then perfected by engineers and other scientists-technicians.

[31] With the help of those who have rid themselves of delusion and achieved Awakening, or who are quite advanced in the process of ridding themselves of delusion and establishing themselves in the Awake condition, we must engage in this process, simultaneously implementing the social, political, economic, scientific, technological, cultural and other transformations necessary for survival and for the transition to a New Age of Communion, plenitude, equity and harmony. If we conceive plans and strategies for survival on the basis of delusion, our attempts to put an end to the crisis will further it, for they will constitute an activity of the same kind, and will be performed with the same mentality as the one that gave rise to our predicament. Only with the help of those who have overcome the delusion at the root of the crisis, and of those who are well advanced in the process of overcoming it, could we manage to put an end to it.

[32] If the implementation of a thesis-project gives rise to practical consequences that radically contradict the aims inherent in the thesis-project, the latter has achieved its empirical *reductio ad absurdum*. However,

in the case of the technological project of domination of all that we see as other with regard to ourselves, it is not only the thesis-project at its root that completes its *reductio ad absurdum* when the implementation of the project gives rise to the ecological crisis that seems to be about to disrupt human society and eventually wipe out human life from the face of the earth: what completes its *reductio ad absurdum* is mainly the basic delusion that, upon developing to a certain degree, gave rise to the technological thesis-project of domination. In fact, this project is a late product of the development of delusion throughout the cosmic cycle (aeon or *kalpa*), which by reducing delusion to absurdity toward the end of the cycle, allows for its eradication at the level of the species (or at least at the level of those members of the species who survive), and thereby makes possible the beginning of a new one (the first stage of which would be a new Golden Age, *satyayuga* or *krityayuga*), or the start of the Millennium predicted in the *Kalachakra Tantra*, the *Book of Ismailians*, the *Apocalypse*, etc. In this regard, see Capriles (1994a).

[33] I have been warned that in English the "cat" sentence is used in the context of erotic relations in a "sexist, women-denigrating sense;" however, this is no reason for sacrificing the allusion to Hegel's *schwartzen Kühen* statement, which to my knowledge has nothing to do with that context or attitude.

[34] Nicholas of Cusa or Nicolaus Cusanus, thus called after the city of Cues (Cusa) where he was born (Nicolaus Chrypffs or Krebs after his family), distinguished among four degrees of knowledge. The highest was the knowledge of God, which can only be attained when a human being goes beyond all other, lower types of knowledge, setting aside the knowledge of the opposites and submerging him or herself in a state of absence of positive determinations in which all assertions are renounced: only this *docta ignorantia*, which was wisdom rather than science, and which implied awareness of the impotence of all rational knowledge, could give access to what the Cusan called speculative reason or intellectual intuition, which was the only faculty that could have knowledge of the *coincidentia oppositorum* inherent in God.

[35] I am referring to processes that may be deemed to be phenomenological in terms of Lambert's concept of phenomenology, and specially in terms of Hamilton's concept of phenomenology, which applies to the realm of psychology as different from that of logic, and in particular to the *processes that are the object* of phenomenology *in terms of Hegel's conception*, according to which phenomenology is the science showing the succession of the different forms or phenomena of consciousness (however, as I show in this chapter, Hegel's view of this succession is inverted). I am also referring to processes that may be deemed phenomenological in terms of Stumpf's concept of phenomenology. However, the post-Husserlian senses of the term are in a way included, insofar as in this book I maintain the phenomenological *epoche* with regard to the existence or nonexistence of a reality external to our perception (which was adopted by the *Madhyamaka* school of philosophy around two millennia ago).

[36] This irreversibility does *not* mean that whatever is built up by means of phenomenological negation cannot be undone; what it means is that it cannot be undone *by means of further phenomenological negations*: in order to undo it, negations have to be *undone*—which can only be achieved by *Seeing through them* into the Self-*qua*-Base.

[37] I am understanding the term "phenomenological" in a wide sense in which it refers to the designates the logic characteristic of the occurrences that take place in human experience, rather than in the different senses thinkers such as Husserl, Heidegger or Sartre gave the word. This is further discussed in Vol. III of this book.

[38] Even though Marxism in general rejected Hegel's concept of nature and in general of the physical universe as a projection of Mind that was not different from Mind, which as such obliterated the map-territory distinction and implied that the dynamic of nature and in general of the physical universe was ruled by the laws of thought, by speaking of a dialectic of nature in spite of the fact that dialectic is supposed to be the movement of Mind and hence of thought, Engels (1998/2001) unwittingly reproduced the Hegelian outlook. With regard to the *Aufhebung* or sublation, whereas in Hegel this negation is what allows the movement of *Geist* (spirit, usually rendered as Mind) to give rise to evolution in the sense of gradual perfecting, Marx views it as the manner of development of material conditions—and although he shares Hegel's inverted view of the development of society as a process of gradual perfecting (which, however, involves repeated "qualitative leaps"), he does not fall into exactly the same error as Engels insofar as these material conditions are those produced by human beings who *in his view* function in terms of the laws of dialectic.

[39] A signal is analog when a magnitude or quantity is used to represent a quantity that changes in a continuous manner in the referent, without leaps or intervals. Contrariwise, a signal is digital if there is a discontinuity between itself and other signals from which it must be distinguished. "Yes" and "no" are examples of digital signals, and the same applies to numbers; however, quantities—even though they are always expressed in numbers—are in themselves analog signals.

The quantifying endeavor that has characterized the sciences since Galileo requires exact measurements, but there are impossible to achieve insofar as discontinuous signals cannot correspond exactly to continuous changes. In fact, analog systems increase in a continuous manner, like the slope of a hill, whereas digital systems increase in terms of discontinuities, like a stairway. When we interpret the slope in stairway terms (as in the example of digital pictures given in the regular text), a perfect correspondence between the one and the other is impossible (however, the smaller the stairs, the less apparent this lack of correspondence will be). Thus the definition of truth as *adæquatio intellectus et rei* (correspondence of the intellect to the things it interprets) is actually the definition of something that is by its own nature impossible. The digital may include increasingly smaller fractions (decimal, centesimal and so on) in order to approach the analog, but this approach will be asymptotic, as it can never reach an exact correspondence with it. (This also refutes the Pythagorean belief that the *arche* is the number and that everything in the universe is no more than numbers—which was reborn in Kepler and his contemporaries, who replaced Aristotelianism with Platonism [Koyré 1973].)

In Capriles (1994a), the first chapter ("Qué es filosofía y cuáles son las causas profundas de la crisis ecológica") explains in greater detail why the perfect *adæquatio intellectus et rei* is impossible, and how all-explanatory systems must necessarily end up contradicting themselves when they try to reach absolute precision.

[40] Numbers are by their very nature digital: fingers are used for counting, and the term "digital" derives from the Latin *digitus-digiti*, which means, "finger." As we have seen, the main trait of the digital is its discontinuity, which is paradigmatically exemplified by the one occurring between one number and the next: one, two, three; one dot one, one dot two, one dot three; one dot eleven, one dot twelve, one dot thirteen; and so on and on *ad infinitum*. This is why the French for "digital" is "numérique."

[41] In Capriles (2004) (the definitive, corrected version of which will soon be available in print) I deal with this problem at greater length. Let us briefly review it here with regard to Nagarjuna's and Chandrakirti's refutation of the alleged self-existence of a cart: if the cart is the sum of the wheels, the axles, the main platform, the seats, the reins and so on, then the cart is not a unity, but an aggregate of unities. If in turn we consider any of these unities, we will realize that it is not a unity but an aggregate... and the same will apply to the unities making up the latter aggregate... so that ultimately entities can neither be seen either as unities (insofar as they are aggregates), or as aggregates of unities (insofar as there are no ultimate unities that may aggregate in order to form them). In the case of the cart, it cannot be said to be a self-existing entity, nor can it be said to be an aggregate of self-existing entities.

Upon reviewing the views of Zeno of Elea (and in particular his proof of Q in the first argument against plurality, based on the argument according to which all that is extended and thus has a size is divisible into parts, and what is divisible into parts is not in itself a unity), Gregory Vlastos has rejected arguments of this kind with the millennia-old line of reasoning that the oneness and the multiplicity of an entity are not mutually exclusive features, and therefore that the multiplicity of what we consider as being "one" and hence as constituting a unity, does not contradict its oneness and therefore does not imply it is not a unity (Vlastos [1968]). However, when a deluded being recognizes and apprehends an entity, he or she perceives that entity as being exclusively and absolutely one (i.e., as being a unity), and there is no comprehension whatsoever in the deluded mind of the fact that the entity also is a multiplicity. If then the same individual mentally disassembles the entity, he or she will perceive it as a multiplicity, and there will be no understanding whatsoever in the deluded mind of the fact that this multiplicity also is a unity. This does not mean that the right thing to do is to say that the entity is both one and multiple, which if left unexplained would violate the law of the excluded middle (or law of the excluded third, or principle of non-contradiction), would not clarify anything, and would be but another conceptual position, contrary to saying that the entity is neither one nor multiple, and equally true and equally false as the latter (it would clarify things if we said that relatively the entity is one when viewed from one standpoint and multiple when seen from another, but that it cannot be said to be either absolutely one or absolutely multiple; however, this would be but another conceptual position which, if grasped at, would give rise to just another instance of delusion).

The delusion consisting in perceiving entities as being inherently and absolutely one and thus as being unities, which implies the negation of the fact that they also are multiplicities (or, upon analysis, the delusion that consists in seeing them as being, inherently and absolutely, multiplicities—which implies the negation of the fact that it is equally valid to see them as unities) is precisely what *Madhyamika* philosophers intended to destroy with their arguments, and it is what is destroyed by Zeno of Elea's "proof of Q" of the first argument against plurality (whatever the real intent of this philosopher may have been). In fact, even though the "proofs" conceived by Zeno of Elea are universally held to have been intended to substantiate a worldview contrary to that of the Madhyamikas (i.e., to show that only thought was real, and that physical reality did not at all exist), they may be used to substantiate the view of the Madhyamikas. The point is that the proof of Q in the first argument against plurality (of entities-unities) and some of the other "proofs" produced by Zeno of Elea to show the supposed inexistence of the physical world, of plurality, and so on (which is supposed to be what Zeno was trying to demonstrate), may as well be used to show that our understanding is one-sided and yet is taken to be the single, total and absolute truth regarding that which it understands—and therefore to show that that understanding is deluded.

Both Zeno and the Madhyamikas also produced refutations of movement (we have knowledge of four arguments against motion developed by Zeno of Elea, which are called: the racecourse, the Achilles, the arrow and the moving blocks; in their turn, the Madhyamikas developed a series of refutations of "going and coming:" the first ones were those that Nagarjuna carried out in the second chapter of his *Mulamadhyamakakarikah*; then Chandrakirti [1974] commented them in the second chapter of the *Mulamadhyamakavrittiprasannapada*; then both the refutations by Nagarjuna and the commentaries by Chandrakirti were commented on by a series of scholars and Masters, including Je Tsongkhapa [1974], who did so in the second chapter of the reputed *dbu ma rtsa ba'i tshig le'ur byas pa shes rab ces bya ba'i rnam bshad rigs pa'i rgya mtsho*.) The latter showed that ultimately we cannot say a moving cart goes over a certain place, for when the front of the cart reaches that place, the back of the cart has not reached it yet, and when the front of the cart just passes that place, the back of the cart has not arrived at it yet. The problem cannot be solved by referring to parts of the cart: when the front of any molecule of the cart arrives at some imaginary mathematical line, the back of that molecule will not have arrived at it yet, and when the back of the molecule arrives at it, the front part will be past it already. Furthermore, if by "moment" we refer to a unit of time having duration, then a moving object could not be said to be in some precise place at some precise moment (for it would not be in the same place throughout the moment), nor could it be said not to be in that place at that moment (for at some point of the moment it may be in that place); if by "moment" we refer to a mathematical point or line along the time line—i.e., to an abstract instant having no duration—then we are not referring to a real time unit but to an intellectual abstraction that can neither be perceived or measured, and it would be a violation of logic to relate it with real, physical objects moving in real, physical time, for it is not legitimate to relate the phenomenal (i.e., the physical) with the non-phenomenal (in this case, the mathematical)...

In fact, as shown below in the regular text of this chapter, Leibniz claimed that space is no more than relations between monads, and made it clear that the latter were *nonphenomenal*. Kant objected that if there were nonphenomenal monads, positing phenomenal space as the result of the relations between monads would amount to mixing up two unmixable levels of reality: the phenomenal and one that would be absolutely other with regard to it. According to Russell and Whitehead's theory of logical types (1910-1913), contradictions between terms are "real" only when both terms belong to the same logical type; in terms of this theory, Leibniz incurred in a breach of logic, for he infringed the rule according to which what belongs to a logical type different from that of the class being considered may neither be included in the class nor be excluded from it—a breach that was neither nullified nor mitigated by Gregory Bateson's posterior observation that, for the theory of logical types to be applied, its rules have to be violated (which in its turn implies that anyone who may have thought this theory did away with the contradictions that have been perceived in Aristotelian logic, would have been utterly wrong). The error Kant perceived in Leibniz is exactly the same type of error we would incur in if we related the movement of phenomenal, physical entities in phenomenal, physical space and time, to nonphenomenal, mathematical instants.

[42] As we have seen, the view expressed in this book is based on awareness of the impossibility of thought to correspond exactly to what it interprets, and in this sense it is contrary to Hegel's, which as we have also

seen, not only posits an exact correspondence of the map of thought to the territory of the given, but asserts the territory to be a projection of the map, not truly different from it.

We have also seen that from one standpoint a table is a table, whereas from other standpoints it is not a table (but pieces of wood joined, molecules, atoms or many other things according to the standpoint we take), and that both views are valid yet none of them gives us the truth concerning the table (nor can we have the truth concerning the table by saying it is *both* a table and not-a-table, or by saying it is *neither* a table not not-a-table, for both alternatives would violate the principle of noncontradiction [or of the excluded middle, or of the excluded third] which is indispensable for establishing truth and untruth—and, should we wish to obtain the false impression that we are not violating it, we would have to illegitimately mix up different categories or logical types. The same applies to the problem of whether moving objects are or are not in the same place at any given moment: as seen in note before last, if by "moment" we refer to a unit of time having duration, then a moving object could not be said to be in some precise place at some precise moment (for it would not be in the same place throughout the moment), nor could it be said not to be in that place at that moment (for at some point of the moment it may be in that place)—and thus both views would be equally valid and equally incapable to give us the truth of the matter (in the sense of corresponding exactly to what they interpret). On the other hand, if by "moment" we understood a mathematical moment having no duration, a moving object would occupy the same place in the same moment—but, as shown in note before last, this would involve incurring in the illegitimate operation of mixing up different logical types (in this case, the phenomenal and the nonphenomenal).

From the standpoint of this book, contradictory views are not mutually exclusive insofar as each is valid from a different standpoint; however, when we perceive the table as a table the delusory valuation of thought causes us to we take this as the absolute truth concerning the object and feel it is *not* not-a-table, and when we perceive it as being something else than a table the delusory valuation of thought causes us to we take this as the absolute truth about the object and feel it is *not* a table: it is here that basic human delusion lies in this respect. The perfectly correct truth would be that of a Buddha who is utterly beyond the delusory valuation of either view, and the relatively correct view would be that of the so-called "correct relative truth" of the post-Contemplation state of superior bodhisattvas, which involves the delusory valuation of thought but also awareness that whatever we posit is just as true and as false as its opposite.

[43] This thesis by Marcuse (which he set forth in ch. 6 of Marcuse [1964], "From Negative to Positive Thinking: Technological Rationality and the Logic of Domination,"), is discussed below in the penultimate section of this chapter, "The Ideological Character of the Sciences, The 'New Paradigm' Championed in the 1980s and 1990s, and the Role of Science and Technology in the New Age."

[44] **This objection by McTaggart is nonetheless doubtful, for he understood "contradiction" in the general sense of the term, failing to mention the difference between the two Hegelian senses of the term. To begin with, it must be clear that Hegel understood error in the sense of partial truth, which consisted in taking the part for the whole, thus ignoring the absolute whole. In Hegel's view, contradiction between partial truths reveals their partiality and becomes an impulse leading toward their surpassing in a more complete vision, which is contradictory in another sense: in that of being the synthesis of contradictory opposites, which is truer than these insofar as it encompasses them and suspends them in the Whole—which, upon entering in contradiction with other truths, in the dialectical process reveals itself as partial truth. In the particular case of the final, true Whole consisting in the Idea, which is no longer a partial truth that must or can be surpassed. This is why Oakeshott (1991) asserted contradictions lay in inferior categories, but not so in the Absolute Concept. This seems to actually express Hegel's belief, for each and every position or thesis would be surpassed through the development of the contradictions it contains, but the absolute concept would no longer involve contradictions—which would be the reason why it would be the final arrival point of human evolution and history, at which perfection and completion would be achieved. However, this does not solve the problem McTaggart denounced, which lies in the seeming impossibility to distinguish the two kinds of contradictions envisaged by Hegel: if reality is itself contradictory (in the general sense of the term, which corresponds to the second sense in Hegel) and in order to describe reality correctly it will have to be described in contradictory terms, then how can we determine that it is contradictions that reveal error to be error (which is what, according to Hegel, impulses the dialectical process toward the final achievement of the absolute concept that according to Oakeshott represented the final and**

definitive surpassing of contradiction)? Mure's (1965) attempt to justify Hegel before McTaggart's criticism seems to have been fruitless. However, some think that in the *Encyclopædia* Hegel surpassed the error being discussed.

At any rate, we have seen that Hegel's dialectic was inverted, as rather than generating ever increasing truth and completion human evolution generates ever increasing abstraction and fragmentation, and that the absolute concept, if attained, would constitute a spurious condition (for spuriousness can only be surpassed by our species if at the end of the time cycle self-consciousness liberates itself spontaneously).

[45] This is why in a previous note it was state that to say the table exists is as valid as to claim the table does not exist, and to say the structure we call "the table" is a table is as valid as to claim it is not a table—for contradictory views may be validly asserted from different perspectives—and yet none of these statements will be correct unless, rather than adhering to one of them as true and taking the opposite as untrue, we are perfectly aware that each is valid as the other. Cf. Capriles (2004, 2005). (The subject is also discussed, though with lesser precision and exhaustiveness, in other older, minor works of mine, and is tangentially touched upon in some older large works of mine.)

[46] The ideas expressed in the following passage are implicit in the discussion of the phenomenon of being in the first chapters of this book; however, at this point is seemed convenient to make them explicit.

[47] The term *rang rgyud* in *rang rgyud du khes len pa* ("self-directed" or "interior-directed assertions") is the one used to refer to the Autonomists or Swatantrikas, because Consequentialists (Prasangikas) considered that only Consequentialists were utterly free from own-mind and therefore from making assertions from the heart (i.e., from making self-directed or interior-directed assertions), and hence they discarded the possibility that Autonomists or Swatantrikas could have posited their autonomous theses and syllogisms without having own-mind, as other-directed assertions. Gendün Chöphel does not appear to have agreed with these early Consequentialists, for in the *dbu ma'i zab gnad snying por dril ba'i legs bshad klu sgrub dgongs rgyan* (Chöphel [2005]) he says that the way of other-directed assertions "is not just a Consequentialist way of understanding; all schools upholding the principles of two truths and provisional and definitive meanings have just the same understanding. Dharmakirti asserted in the *Pramanavarttikakarika*, 'The truth of thatness has no prejudice; with a confident detached stance, one accepts the material world'." There is no doubt that other-directed assertions are not an exclusive feature of Consequentialists, for (as will be asserted below) all Awake individuals (including Consequentialists) posit autonomous syllogisms without having own-mind and therefore as merely other-directed assertions.

As shown in my Introduction to Chöphel's book (Capriles [2005]), Tsongkhapa rejected the concept of not having own-mind and hence not making assertions from the heart (i.e., not making self-directed or interior-directed assertions); therefore, Gendün Chöphel tells us that, since the terms other-directed / exterior-directed assertions and self-directed / interior-directed assertions were in the teachings, Tsongkhapa had to give them a new sense, which is discussed in my Introduction.

[48] This may help one to set the Tantric precept obliging one to "lie" in the perspective of one's degree of advancement on the Path (i.e., whether one is in the first or second paths, in the third or fourth paths, or in the fifth path and thus has gone beyond practice). In fact, in the case of beginner bodhisattvas who, in order to advance on the Path, have to convince themselves and others of what they take as being the truths of the *dharma*, what they tell cannot be said to be "lies," for they really take them to be true. In their turn, higher bodhisattvas in the state of post-Contemplation have to "lie" to both themselves and others insofar as they are aware that the teachings of the *dharma* they have to posit are not really true, and that there is no self to be liberated in either themselves or others—and since they delusorily value their perceptions, in this case they experience what they say as being lies... Finally, Buddhas, insofar as they do not delusorily value whatever they say, are beyond both lying and saying the truth.

[49] According to the studies by Frances Moore-Lappé and Joseph Collins, from the Institute for Food and Development Policy in San Francisco (Moore-Lappé & Collins [1977a, 1977b]; Moore Lappé, Collins & Rosset [with Esparza] [1998]; in Capra [1982], pp. 258-259), the world production of grain in 1977 would have been enough to feed properly twice the world population of the same year. However, they made it clear that for this to be so it would have been necessary to radically transform current modes of production and distribution of food, for these modes of production are designed in such a way as to provide the rich with extravagant amounts of animal proteins produced from vegetable proteins, by methods which turn many units of vegetable proteins into a single unit of animal protein and thus reduce to a fraction the amount of protein available for human consumption—whereas the prevailing

socioeconomic system makes the great bulk of the world population incapable to pay for the nutrients they need in order to be properly nourished. Moore-Lappé and Collins list as the reasons of this scandalous injustice: socioeconomic inequality; the unequal distribution of the means of food production; agroindustrial production and what the great corporations in the food business perceive as being their own interests; the model of nutrition imposed by transnational corporations and First World governments (which as we have seen is based on the conversion of great amounts of vegetable protein into small amounts of animal protein); and the Gargantuan appetites of the "privileged"—including most citizens of First World States and the "rich" of other regions—who consume most of the products and the energy produced worldwide. Moore-Lappé (Moore-Lappé [1971]) previously showed how the combination of different types of vegetable proteins could result in a vegetarian diet supplying sufficient protein to human beings. Since the higher Buddhist Paths require the consumption of meat, this product should be produced by the traditional preindustrial means that were not based on the transformation of rich sources of vegetable protein into relatively poor sources of animal protein (furthermore, in places such as Yörmo in Nepal, the Buddhist prohibition of killing animals for their meat is honored, and only the meat of animals dying of natural death is consumed—of course, after processing it in such a way as to prevent the transmission of potential infectious illnesses).

[50] In Habermas (1982), taking interest as a criterion, human action was classified into three main classes: instrumental, communicative and emancipatory. To Habermas, instrumental action must characterize the relationships between human beings and the natural environment, whereas communicative action (and, whenever necessary, emancipatory action) must characterize the relationships between human beings. (In this regard, Habermas seems to be following a thesis of Engels'. In Fetscher [1971], we read: "In classless society, which Marx regard as the final stage of social evolution, the problem of the State and the problem of bureaucracy [will] disappear together. *Then there will be no longer domination of man by man—and instead of dominating persons things will be dominated*. In *Das Kapital*, Marx admits repeatedly that also in this classless society there will continue to be a certain dosage of subordination and authority, but it will be objectively conditioned and rationally founded relationships—which Marx, evidently, regards as compatible with a complete freedom.")

In proposing the above, Habermas overlooks two important realities:

(1) First of all, he overlooks the fact that, since secondary process works on the basis of primary process, in trying to determine the experience and behavior of human beings secondary process must face the limitations imposed by the code of primary process, which makes the attempts by secondary process to control experience and behavior often give rise to unwanted and unsuspected effects. Once given types of primary process relations develop—as happens with instrumental relations in the *kaliyuga* or age of darkness—and these begin to gain ground in all fields, it is not possible to put a lid to their development in some fields, confining it to others. This is due to the fact that primary process: (a) lack negatives, and (b) places the emphasis on relationships, rather than on who is who in them or in the direction of the relation. Because of the former, the "no" that secondary process may give the development of a primary process relation in a certain ambit does not function as a negation in the latter code, and on the contrary, by placing the emphasis on what is being denied, it may foster its development. Because of the latter, primary process cannot establish hermetic limits between the relations that occur between human beings, and the ones that take place between human beings and phenomena that are not human beings—and hence the attempts by secondary process to impose different patterns of relation to the two spheres of relations cannot be fully effective at the deepest level of our experience.

(2) Besides, it overlooks the fact that instrumental relations with the "natural environment" are at the root of the ecological crisis that threatens to put an end to all life on our planet. According to the interpretation of the degenerative view of human evolution and history developed in Capriles (1994a), in the earliest stage of humankind the non-relational condition that I have referred to by the Christian term "Communion," in which the single, divine essence of all essents was directly realized, alternated with the relational state of post-Communion, in which all relations were communicative insofar as there was still a residual awareness that all essents were ultimately divine (as we have seen, the reference to an initial stage when the human lifespan was infinite suggests that in that stage there was no post-Communion, but I have decided to skip consideration of this). Later on, when Communion became rarer and the relational state became the only one most human beings could experience, the loss of the capacity of Communion resulted in the inability to recognize the divine in other human beings and in the rest of nature, and in the origination and development of the vertical relationship that, as will be shown below in the regular text

of this chapter, manifested in art as the "birth of the gods"—and so after a relatively short time political power and social and economic differences arose. Parallel to this, the ego delusion continued to develop, causing us to believe ourselves ever more firmly to be inherently a separate, limited self (or ego), and therefore giving rise to ever-increasing selfishness (or egotism)—and so with the passing of time the combination of selfishness, verticality and the incapacity to perceive the divine in nature and other human beings and to place ourselves in their place caused vertical relations to acquire an instrumental character. Then came the division into two kinds of human groups represented by the myth of Cain and Abel, resulting in the exertion of violence against other sentient beings at the root of the Jungian shadow that, as shown in a previous chapter, catalyzed the development of evil—which then developed into the exploitation and oppression of other human beings and of the whole of the natural environment, and finally into what Bateson called *conscious purpose against nature*.

[51] This critique is based on the fact that Husserl's critique of the "technicalization" of science (Husserl, Edmund, English 1970) was directed against the formalization of science, rather than implying that a commitment to technical control was inherent in the essence of science: what Husserl refers to as technique is mathematics (and in particular geometry), which Galileo and other Plato-influenced founding fathers of modern science took to constitute the "real world" that is uncovered by science—the shifting world of appearances being for them somehow and somewhat unreal (whereas according to Husserl with regard to both worlds it was imperative to maintain the phenomenological *epoche*—and thus taking one to be true and the other unreal would be unwarranted). Furthermore, Husserl did not regard the hard sciences as being ideological, but as being rigorous, and viewed its results as being unquestionable (though according to him the same was not the case with psychology). At any rate, even if we accepted that Marcuse arrived at some of his views concerning science and technology on the basis of a misinterpretation of Husserl's views, this would not at all mean that his own views in this regard are wrong. And even if we accepted that "Husserl's arguments against Galilean realism present problems," this would have very little to do with the validity or not of Marcuse's views on science and technology.

At any rate, no one would claim that Marcuse misinterpreted Heidegger's radical critique of technology (Heidegger [1977]), which seems to have been a weightier influence on him, as well as on the rest of the Frankfurt School (which synthesized Marxian philosophy with elements from Heidegger's philosophy, psychoanalysis and other sources).

[52] The experienced speed of passing time is directly proportional to the rate of the vibratory activity at the root of delusory valuation, and therefore when this activity becomes too fast, it becomes untenable and collapses (which I have compared to a dog running after its own tail whose legs at some point cannot keep up with the speed, as a result of which the dog falls on it face): at this point, the units of "lived time" become so small that "subjective" time disintegrates, deactivating delusion.

The acceleration of time and the increase of contradiction as the aeon unfolds are exponential; however, the first duplication takes many thousands of years... Duplications continue to take place until they occur in years... And then finally result in the disconnection of the delusory valuation of thought and concomitant temporality.

[53] Toward the beginning of the cycle, negative feedback is determinant and positive feedback has very little power to influence the human dynamics. As the cycle advances, positive feedback increases its power and importance, until, toward the end of the cycle, it clearly predominates over negative feedback. This is why the duplication of the human wayward dynamics and of the acceleration of time happens ever more often as the cycle unfolds.

[54] Having been influenced by left-wing anarchism during his stay in France, Shri Aurobindo became a left-wing activist for Indian independence until he realized he would be killed if he continued along the path he was following, and hence gave up political activism and went into seclusion, devoting himself to the practice of Hindu *Tantra*. He believed that oppression in Marxist states would be the source of the desire for total freedom that would lead to the extinction of the State. Paradoxically, despite espousing Tantrism, he believed the *Rigveda* (the first of the *Vedas* in the *Samhita* collection, which is almost exclusively Indo-European in content) to be the highest of the *Vedas*, and the *Atharvaveda*, in which the nondual doctrines at the root of Communion which had prevailed among the Dravidians surfaced (together with the magical elements of Dravidian and pre-Dravidian religion and even with elements of sorcery), to be the lowest of *Vedas*.

[55] This subject is not part of the theme of this book; I dealt with it in length in Capriles (1994a), and thus refer the reader to the work in question. Here, suffice to say that, among the reasons why the extinction of the

State cannot be achieved by implementing a dictatorship of the proletariat, and why Marxist revolutions have failed and capitalism has been restored or is on the way of being restored in most ex-Marxist and supposedly Marxist states, in the above-mentioned work I listed the following:

1) That the *reductio ad absurdum* of the basic human delusion and all that developed during the present time cycle had not been completed. As we have seen, since the "no" that secondary process gives to a primary process structure and function cannot cause the eradication of the structure and function in question, but, contrariwise, places an emphasis on that which is negated, furthering it and fueling it, there is no way that an intentional, conscious attempt to interrupt a primary process structure and function may achieve its goal—and, on the contrary, it is likely to achieve the very opposite of what it intends. As we have seen, only when the *reductio ad absurdum* of basic human delusion and of all that developed with it throughout the cycle has been completed, can this delusion and all that grew with it be surpassed.

2) If people whose psyche reproduces the vertical, instrumental, utilitarian, selfish structure and function internalized in current vertical, instrumental, utilitarian, selfish societies, manage to obtain political power and then attempt to transform society, in this attempt they will necessarily reproduce the vertical, instrumental, utilitarian, selfish structure and function in question. Furthermore, as shown in the regular text of this chapter, wayward characteristics grow from their own feedback while, in the process of degenerative evolution, people switch the secondary-process-position they occupy in primary-process-relations of oppression; therefore, so long as the psyche is not transformed in a radical way, there is no way we can change society in an equally radical way. The conditions for this transformation to be possible are, among others: that the *reductio ad absurdum* of delusion be completed, so that radical change at all levels may become possible; that the practice of the traditions of Awakening may restore free access to the state of Communion; and that, at the same time as we set out to transform the psyche, we set out to transform society. This is so because while the internalization of social relations structures the psyche, the psyche's actions reproduce the psyche's structure and so this structure equally structures society.

3) The third of these reasons is that a dictatorship cannot carry out the dissolution of the State, not only because it will give rise to an elite that then would cling to power and will struggle to maintain class and power distinctions, but, more generally, for the same reasons why in 1941 (in the Conference on Science, Religion and Philosophy that took place in New York) Margaret Mead and Gregory Bateson warned that democracy could not be implemented by means of social engineering. Bateson (1972) praised and summarized the paper by his ex-wife, Margaret Mead, in the following words:

"Dr. Mead's contribution consists in this—that she, fortified by comparative study of other cultures, has been able to transcend the habits of thought current in her own culture and has been able to say virtually this: "Before we apply social science to our own national affairs, we must re-examine and change our habits of thought on the subject of means and ends. We have learned, in our cultural setting, to classify behavior into 'means' and 'ends' and if we go on defining ends as separate from means and apply the social sciences as crudely instrumental means, using the recipes of science to manipulate people, we shall arrive at a totalitarian rather than a democratic system of life." The solution that she offers is that we look for the 'direction' and 'values' implicit in the means, rather than looking ahead to a blueprinted goal and thinking of this goal as justifying or not justifying manipulative means. We have to find the value of a planned act implicit in and simultaneous with the act itself, not separate from it in the sense that the act would derive its value from reference to a future end or goal...

"...a discrepancy—a basic and fundamental discrepancy—exists between 'social engineering', manipulating people in order to achieve a planned blueprint society, and the ideal of democracy, the 'supreme worth and moral responsibility of the individual human person'. The two conflicting motifs have long been implicit in our culture, science has had instrumental leanings since before the Industrial Revolution, and emphasis upon individual worth and responsibility is even older. The threat of conflict between the two motifs has only come recently, with increasing consciousness of, and emphasis upon, the democratic motif and simultaneous spread of the instrumental motif. Finally, the conflict is now a life-or-death struggle over the role which the social sciences should play in the ordering of human relationships. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that this war (i.e., the Second World War) is ideologically about just this—the role of social science. Are we to reserve the techniques and the right to manipulate people as the privilege of a few planning, goal-oriented, power-hungry individuals, to whom the instrumentality of science makes a natural appeal? Now that we have the techniques, are we, in cold blood, going to treat people as things? Or what are we doing with those techniques?

"(The planners) ignore the fact that in social manipulation, the tools are not hammers and screwdrivers. A screwdriver is not seriously affected when, in an emergency, we use it as wedge; and a hammer's outlook on life is not affected because we some times use its handle as a simple lever. But in social manipulation our tools are people, and people learn, and they acquire habits which are more subtle and pervasive than the trick which the blueprinter teaches them... Whenever they meet certain sorts of context, they will tend to see these contexts as structured on an earlier familiar pattern. The blueprinter may derive an initial advantage from the children's tricks; but the ultimate success of his blueprint may be destroyed by the habits of mind which were learned with the trick."

4) The fourth of these reasons is that, as Trotsky was right in noting, it was impossible to totally do away with capitalism (and, even more so, with power and class divisions) in a world in which Capitalism prevails in most nations. In fact, this results in the nation trying to implement a revolution having to compete against capitalism in terms of the values, standards and ways of measuring wealth characteristic of capitalism—when capitalism is most effective in accomplishing capitalistic aims. Furthermore, it exposes the nation involved in the revolution to meddling in its internal affairs, plots, subversion and so on.

These are only four of the most obvious reasons why Marxist revolutions are most unlikely to succeed in achieving the transformations they intend to carry out, among those I considered in Capriles (1994a).

[56] In the penultimate section of this chapter Ken Wilber's objections to the use of modern physics to "prove" mysticism, as laid down in his Preface to the Reader *Quantum Questions* (1984, Boulder & London, Shambhala), are considered.

[57] The Traditionalist movement arose to defend elitist and anti-egalitarian views, together with a pessimistic view of ordinary life and of history, and a radical rejection of the modern world; it is thus easy to understand why it opposed so fiercely the democratic, scientist, evolutionist views of the Theosophical Society (which validate the Modern project that resulted in the current ecological crisis and that threatens to put an end to our species, and which hence I reject as radically as those held by the Traditionalist movement).

The Traditionalist movement began with René Guénon (1886-1951), who after converting to Islam and moving to Cairo revived interest in the concept of Tradition, which he understood in the sense of continuity of the teachings and doctrines of spiritual elites in ancient civilizations and religions, and which he asserted had a perennial value over and against the modern world and its offshoots—which included humanistic individualism, relativism, materialism, and scientism. Though Guénon asserted that in the primordial age of perfection there was a single caste, which was called *hamsa* and which possessed a very high spirituality, he follows Brahmanic casteism in claiming that, once the division into various castes took place, the Brahmin caste was the spiritually superior one (Guénon [2001]; Fernández Colón [2005])—outright contradicting the view of Buddhist Tantrism expounded below in this note. **(Check whether this is the best place to introduce this, or whether it is better to introduce where the Tantric view is expounded below in this note.)**

Other important Traditionalists of the past century included Ananda Coomaraswamy, Frithjof Schuon, Martin Lings ("Abu-Bakr Siraj-ud-din") and Julius Evola, who wrote a book on Guénon that referred to him as "A Teacher for Modern Times" (Evola [1994]). **Minor traditionalists among many others are the French poet and writer Jean Biès, as well as the Italian author Ellemire Zola, who in Zola (1998) honors Guénon and elucidates the latter's concept of "tradition," and Zola's wife Grazia Marchianò, a leading follower of Coomaraswamy in the field of comparative aesthetics.**

Evola: In Lee (1997), Evola is called a "Nazi philosopher" and it is said he "helped compose Italy's belated racialist laws toward the end of the Fascist rule." In Laqueur (1996, pp. 97-98), he is called a "learned charlatan, an eclecticist, not an innovator." Sheehan (1981) and Drake (1986, 1988, 1989) asserted that Evola supplied ideological justification for the famous bloody campaign by right wing terrorists in Italy during the 1980, whereas Philippe Rees (1991) affirms that "Evolian-inspired violence result[ed] in the Bologna station bombing of 2 August 1980." Evola has been called racist, rabid anti-Semite, mastermind of right-wing terrorism, fascist guru. During the Fascist era he was somewhat sympathetic to Mussolini and fascist ideology, but his aristocratic and anti-populist views prevented him from becoming a card-carrying member of the Fascist party; however, Evola's anti-materialistic and non-biological racial views won Mussolini's enthusiastic endorsement. According to Evola, the cultivation of the "spiritual race" should take precedence over the selection of the somatic race, which is determined by the laws of genetics and with which the Nazis were obsessed. After Mussolini was freed from his Italian captors in a daring German raid led by SS-Hauptsturmführer Otto Skorzeny, Evola was among a handful of faithful

followers who met him at Hitler's headquarters in Rastenburg, East Prussia, on September 14, 1943. While sympathetic to the newly formed Fascist government in the north of Italy, which continued to fight on the Germans' side against the Allies, Evola rejected its republican and socialist agenda, its populist style, and its antimonarchical sentiments. When Evola was hit by a bomb in an air raid, René Guénon wrote to him suggesting that his misfortune may have been induced by a curse or magical spell cast by some powerful enemy (Evola [1994]); however, despite their close association, and the fact that they belonged to the same movement, Guénon did not quote Evola in his works—about which the latter complained. Evola's main work was *Revolt against the Modern World*.

Schuon: In Schuon (1986), the author made an extensive and intensive apology of imperialism, propounded a impossible regress to political forms to a great extent Medieval, expounded extreme elitist views, and charged against non-creationistic, non-theistic explanations of the origin of the world and of the human phenomenon—thus indirectly repudiating Buddhism, Taoism and other non-theistic religions and denying their validity, and thereby contradicting the ecumenicist stand he proclaimed in his books (which paradoxically include works on Buddhism, just as those by Guénon include studies on Taoism!).

Biès: In Biès (1985) we find a right-wing usage of the degenerative vision of evolution and history, for the author follows Brahmanic orthodoxy and asserts that in the *satyayuga* or era of truth, rather than there being no social, economic or political divisions (as asserted by the original version of the view of degenerative evolution, as manifest in the Bönpo tradition of the Himalayas, in Dravidian Shaivas and later Tantrics of India, in Taoists of China, in the Stoics of Greece, etc.), the *Brahmin* caste prevailed; that in the *tretayuga* or era of there the *Kshatriya* caste prevailed; that in the *dwaparayuga* or era of two the *Vaishya* caste had the upper hand; that in the *kaliyuga* the *Shudra* caste comes to prevail; that at the end of the *kaliyuga* it is the dalits or untouchables that prevail (which he justified on the grounds that Marxist revolutions placed political power in the hands of the proletariat—which, by the way, is a baseless assumption, for though in theory all Marxist states should have been "dictatorships of the proletariat," in practice very few Marxist leaders were of proletarian extraction); and that our hopes lie in the restoration of Brahmin power in the *satyayuga* of the next cosmic cycle. Biès asserts that the spiritual systems most appropriate for the *kaliyuga* are the various types of Tantrism, but, as we have seen, he contradicts the Tantric view of the *satyayuga* or *krityayuga* as the era in which there are no social, economic or political differences, as well as the Tantric view of the *Brahmin* caste as the one with the lowest spiritual potential (see below). Furthermore, he declares the socialist interpretation of the Gospel and the literal admission of the egalitarian and communitarian statements that abound in it to be a gross error.

(Above it was noted that according to Tantrism the *Brahmin* caste is the one with the lowest spiritual potential. This is due to the fact that Tantrism represented a revival of pre-Indo-European traditions that viewed the body and its impulses as sacred means for attaining the unconcealment of the divine, and included among its skillful means the use of alcohol and the Tantric Bacchanals; therefore, the prejudices and the antisomatism of the Brahmins made them least apt to practice Paths such as those of transformation and of spontaneous liberation. The Kshatriyas were slightly less unsuitable to practice these Paths, the Vaishyas even less so, and the Shudras were most apt among caste Indians. Though some mahasiddhas, such as the great Sarahapada and others, came from Brahmin families, often the greatest mahasiddhas and realized beings came from the lowest type of untouchables (the Chandalas and Chandalis, in charge of the disposal of corpses). This inversion of the traditional caste-structure was reflected in the Tantric appraisal of the spiritual capacity of the members of the different castes. With regard to the classification of the Tantras into four vehicles, as taught by the Sarmapa Schools in Tibet, an unpublished manuscript by Chögyäl Namkhai Norbu translated by Adriano Clemente gives us a summary by Jamgön Kongtrul the Great of the views of Nagarjuna, *Rab 'byor bskyans* and others:

("In the *Shes bya Kun khyab* we read:

("'These are four types of disciples of the Buddha: (1) those who appreciate to a greater extent external practices such as purification and ablutions, who desire to practice the Teaching in this way; (2) those who are more interested in the real meaning and less in external actions; (3) those who understand that external actions can be a source of distraction, and therefore dedicate themselves principally to meditation on the real inner meaning; and (4), those who rejoice in the enjoyments through the nondual wisdom of method and *prajña*.

("'When these four types of disciple receive a Teaching, they become respectively followers of (1) *Kriya*[*tantra*], (2) *Ubhaya*[*tantra*] [or *Charyatantra*], (3) *Yoga*[*tantra*], and (4) *Anuttarayogatantra*.

("'To transmit the Teaching to the four types of disciples in accordance with their inclinations there have therefore been imparted teachings related to the four types of *Tantra*: to those who feel greater attachment and lust, and who in the Hindu tradition are followers of the god Shiva, the method of the *Anuttaratantra* was transmitted; to those who are conditioned by anger, who in the Hindu tradition are followers of the methods linked to *Vishnu*, the method of the *Ubhayatantra* was taught; to those who are more obscured by ignorance, who traditionally follow the methods linked to Brahma, the *Kriyatantra* has been taught; to the individuals with undefined characteristics the *Yogatantra* was taught. These considerations are explained in the *De nyid 'Dus pa*, which contains the way of seeing of Masters such as Nagarjuna, *Rab 'byor bskyans* and others."

("And furthermore:

("'The (*Anuttarayogatantra* titled) *Dur khrod smad du byung ba rgyud* maintains that in order to discipline Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shudras with the Teaching, and to carry them onto the Path, the four series of Tantras were transmitted, namely the *Kriya*[*tantra*], *Ubhaya*[*tantra* or *Charyatantra*], *Yoga*[*tantra*] and *Anuttara*[*yoga*]*tantra*.

The (*Tantra* titled) *rDo rje gur* (*mkha' 'gro ma dra ba rdo rje gur zhes bya ba'i rgyud kyi rgyal po*) states:

("'To those with an inferior capacity the *Kriyatantra* was taught.

("'To those with a medium capacity the *Ubhayatantra* was taught.

("'To those with a superior capacity the *Yogatantra* was taught.

("'To those with a supreme capacity the *Anuttara*[*yoga*]*tantra* was taught'.")

[58] Though Wilber's system of fulcra as a whole, which purportedly applies to all spiritual Paths, does not correspond to spiritual development on any Buddhist Path, I have found no self-evident blunders in his explanation of the succession of lower fulcra in ontogenesis.

[59] His entourage featured one thousand and two Buddhas who shone with the brightest of lights—which meant that in this propitious aeon one thousand Buddhas and two supreme bodhisattvas would manifest.

[60] Namkhai Norbu and A. Clemente (1999, p. 265) name a full series of texts later than the *Rig pa rang shar*, which list the names of the Masters in question. Here I will mention only the *Treasure of the Supreme Vehicle* or *Tegchog dzö* (*theg mchog mdzod*) by Longchen Rabjampa (*klong chen rab 'byams pa*); for the complete list, cf. the above-referred book by Norbu and Clemente.

[61] So far as my studies go, the teachings do not seem so clear in this regard. The claim that in the first period of all time cycles the duration of human life is limitless seems to imply that there is no post-Communion state, for it is in the Communion state that the timeless condition of Total Space-Time-Awareness manifests, whereas in the post-Communion state there is the experience of the passing of time (which may be slower of faster according to how far the time cycle has developed).

However, since the idea that the whole of humankind (or the part of humankind that survives the massive upheavals and destruction at the end of the time cycle) may attain full, irreversible Awakening simultaneously as the cycle ends does not seem so plausible to our mentality in the beginnings of the twenty-first century CE, I will assume throughout this chapter that in the initial period of a cycle and in the millennium announced by the *Kalachakra Tantra* a Communion and a post-Communion state alternate.

[62] Cf. the preceding note.

[63] The concept of *neue Mitte* was issued by Gerhard Schroeder, but Angela Merkel in her coalition government set to follow the same model (which had already been deemed unavoidable by Kohl).

[64] In Wikipedia we read (at the URL http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iraq_War):

Total deaths (all excess deaths) Johns Hopkins - As of June 2006: 654,965 (range of 392,979–942,636). 601,027 were violent deaths (31% attributed to Coalition, 24% to others, 46% unknown)[1][2]

War-related & criminal violence deaths (all Iraqis) Iraq Health Minister. Through early November 2006: 100,000-150,000[3][4]

War-related & criminal violence deaths (civilians) Iraq Body Count - English language media only: 69,045-75,495[5]

[1] "Mortality after the 2003 invasion of Iraq: a cross-sectional cluster sample survey"PDF (242 KiB). By Gilbert Burnham, Riyadh Lafta, Shannon Doocy, and Les Roberts. The Lancet, October 11, 2006

[2] The Human Cost of the War in Iraq: A Mortality Study, 2002-2006PDF (603 KiB). By Gilbert Burnham, Shannon Doocy, Elizabeth Dzeng, Riyadh Lafta, and Les Roberts. A supplement to the second Lancet study.

[3] "Iraqi death toll estimates go as high as 150,000". Taipei Times, November 11, 2006.

[4] "Iraqi health minister estimates as many as 150,000 Iraqis killed by insurgents". International Herald Tribune. Nov. 9, 2006.

[5] Iraq Body Count project.

[65] The quote from Roszak in Taylor (2005, p. 240) is:

"Tribal societies have abused and even ruined their habitat. In prehistoric times, the tribal and nomadic people of the Mediterranean basin over cut and overgrazed the land so severely that the scars of the resulting erosion can still be seen. Their sacramental sense of nature did not offset their ignorance of the low range damage they were doing to their habitat." (Roszak, 1992, p. 226)

[66] For example,

cite the salmon in p. 241 and then other Amerindians in pp. 242-243...

[67] American Indians, just like the most ancient pre-Buddhist Tibeto-Burmans from Zhang Zhung and the aborigines from different regions, seem to have found themselves in a pancommunicative condition and therefore related with natural phenomena as though they were persons rather than mere lifeless things. The best-known example of this attitude among North American Aborigines is the words Chief Seattle, the patriarch of the Duwamish and Suquamish Indians of Puget Sound, was supposed to have pronounced in 1854—which, however, are now the subject of polemic, as shown in the following excerpt from Bracho (2005):

"A certain historical controversy has arisen concerning what Chief Seattle exactly said or did not say. This controversy has been fed both by legitimate reasons and by factions interested in undermining the indigenous-ecological movement. Concerning the former (the only ones that will be dealt with in this work), they were perhaps to be expected, since Seattle did not read or left any written record of his own, but spoke in an inspired way, as was the custom in his culture and as was proper of a powerful natural speaker like him.

"Furthermore, he did so in his own language, the Lushootseed, from which it was necessary to translate to the Chinook, a dialect arisen from the mixture of indigenous languages, French and English, which was the commercial lingua franca in the area—from which it was necessary to translate into English for the ears of Commissioner Stevens. In such a chain of translation... surely much of the original could be lost. Then the passing of time and the "transcribing liberties" of those who carried down the original, added more [potential sources of distortion]...

"However, in spite of all the above, the available historical evidence, including checking against the oral testimonies of the descendants of Seattle's own tribe, as well as comparison with other indigenous traditions, have corroborated the basic authenticity and coherence of what has arrived of Seattle's discourse to our time.

"The latter includes the there main versions of it that are known today: the one by Henry Smith, Seattle's contemporary and eyewitness of the discourse who published his transcription of it thirty years later; the version of the end of the 1960s produced by Texas University researcher William Arrowsmith... who rendered the more ornate Victorian English in the transcription of his predecessor into a plainer English more in agreement with the Indian style, making his text public during the celebration of the first "Day of the Earth" in 1970; and [the one by] professional script writer Ted Perry, a teacher at the same University, who adapted and modified Arrowsmith's text for an ecological-educational video commissioned by the Christian church of the Southern Baptists through its producer John Stevens...—a version that catapulted Seattle to the national and international celebrity he now enjoys, mainly after its publication in *Passages*, the magazine of Northwestern Airlines...

"From all three versions, beyond their greater or lesser fidelity to what Seattle really said, a common message follows that is responsible for the universal impact the discourse has had. A message that could be expressed in the following terms: 'If every corner of our land is sacred to us and our venerated forefathers, if we do not consider ourselves to be owners of the sky, the water and the earth, how could we pretend to sell them to you and how could you pretend to become their owners'. A message that makes it clear that the human being is a custodian rather than the owner of the Universe, and who therefore has the duty of responsibly caring for it, rather than of selfishly owning it."

The letter Chief Seattle supposedly wrote to US President Franklin Pierce in 1855, is now universally known to be a hoax, and the purported discourse chief Seattle gave in 1854 (or 1855), as reported by Henry Smith in 1887, has *not* been proven beyond the slightest shadow of doubt to be genuine either (cf., for example, the evaluation of the various documents discussed above at the URL http://members.aol.com/pantheism0/indians.htm). However, Henry Smith's version was published during

his lifetime (in 1887), and so there are no doubts as to its authorship; since it seems hardly possible that a man of European descent would put in the mouth of an Indian sage like Seattle, utterly non-European ideas which express so masterfully the North American aboriginal worldview, we are bound to conclude that they reflect to a greater or lesser degree what Seattle said in his discourse—and therefore that Bracho is not likely to be hallucinating when, in the above-quoted excerpt, he notes that the attempts to dismiss Smith's transcription of Seattle's discourse may be due to an interest factions share in undermining the indigenous-ecological movement. At any rate, here I am not concerned with the historical reality of falsehood of Seattle's words, for this book, rather than having scientific pretensions, is intended to express a narrative that I believe may help our species take the road to a bright future rather than that to self-destruction.

Furthermore, manifold documents attest to the pancommunicative attitude of American aboriginal sages and their astonishment before the attitude of the European invaders toward the so-called natural "environment." Many statements by American aboriginal sages, including the remarkable statements by Sitting Bull, were reproduced in Harrison, Paul, 1997. As a token of the texts offered, consider the following, extremely brief statement by Sitting Bull:

"Every seed is awakened and so is animal life. It is through this mysterious power that we too have our being and we therefore yield to our animal neighbors the same right as ourselves, to inhabit this land."

[68] Neo-liberal thinking in the sense I am giving the term (i.e., in that of the economic ideology of Hayek and the Chicago Boys) insists on the need to allow the economy to regulate itself through "the invisible hand of the market " However, as shown in Bairoch (1995), the most extraordinary myth of economic theory is that free markets provide the path to development, for the industrial crown jewels of the world's most dynamic and powerful economies became what they are today due to State subventions and other forms of interventionism. He writes:

"It is difficult to find another case where the facts contradict so directly a dominant theory."

For his part, Noam Chomsky (Chomsky & Dieterich [1997], p. 27) notes that Bairoch undervalues the importance for the rich of interventions by the State, because he limits himself in a conventional manner to a restricted category of market interferences.

[69] With regard to the fact that laws give rise to the evils they are supposed to contain, besides fact that a "law of inverted effect" is inherent in the relations between primary and secondary processes (associated with the two cerebral hemispheres), or to the associated relations between conscious identity and the *unconscious phantasy* which is the Jungian shadow, there is the fact that laws require enforcement, and those who enforce them are corruptible humans; therefore, law begets corruption.

[70] The loss of the *tao* is illusory, for in truth the "Fall" corresponding to the loss in question is part of the *tao*'s flow, and the same applies to all thoughts and acts of human beings after this "Fall." In other words, what is lost is not the *tao qua* Base, but the *unveiling* of the *tao qua* Base that here I have been referring to as the *tao qua* Path and the *tao qua* Fruit. The term here translated as "virtue" is *te*, which refers to the *tao*'s virtue in the sense in which one speaks of the "healing virtue" of a plant: it is not "virtue" in the Kantian sense in which a person is said to be virtuous when she or he resists the impulses issuing from selfishness, and artificially sets to help others. The way the *tao*'s *te* or virtue remains after the *tao* is veiled has been compared with a mothball that has been removed from a drawer, without its smell disappearing from the drawer.

[71] As we all know, St. John Evangelist lived in Ephesus—Heraclitus' place of birth—and his usage of the word can but remind us the Ancient Greek philosopher's use of the term. It is significant that the translators of St. John's Gospel into Chinese rendered "*Logos*" as "*tao*," so that the Gospel begins "In the beginning there was the *tao*."

[72] The state of Communion (being) beyond conceptualization, it does not involve interpretation of the nature of the whole as either "divine" or "profane." However, in the post-Communion state, in which there is conceptualization, one may conclude that the true nature of all reality that became patent in the state of Communion is "divine" or "sacred" with regard to the fragmentary perceptions involving the delusion of self-being that manifest in post-Communion (or with regard to those that manifested before Communion occurred for the first time). Furthermore, as one becomes increasingly familiar with the state of Communion, in post-Communion one ever more easily recognizes the divine in the profane, so to speak.

As it becomes increasingly difficult to access the state of Communion, at some point it becomes utterly impossible to recognize the divine in the profane, and as a result all and everything is perceived profanely: this is what Max Weber called "*die Entzauberung der Welt*" or "the disenchantment of the

world," and that Schiller called "*die Entgöterung der Natur*" or "disdeification of nature"—which, however, as understood here is something that took place long before the "moments" (so to speak) at which these authors placed this occurrence.

[73] This will be touched upon once more below with regard to Roszak (1992). At this point, suffice to say that degeneration in those peoples that in our time still have a tribal structure and function occurs independently of whether or not they interact with "civilized" peoples, and that in the former it proceeds differently than it does in the latter. For example, unlike the peoples of the Paleolithic as envisaged in this "metanarrative," most tribal peoples of our time have a predominantly shamanic spirituality that not always conserved metashamanic elements. Likewise, though peoples such as the Yanomamis are, from the technical standpoint, in the Paleolithic, unlike the European and North-African humans of the Paleolithic studied by paleopathologists, Yanomami groups recurrently wage war against other Yanomami groups—and, moreover, all such groups have ritual ways for their members to engage in fights with members of their own group. Furthermore, anthropologists have commented on the supposed cruelty of Yanomamis toward their domestic animals. Of course, we cannot be sure that all this is not a result of their encroachment by "civilized" peoples, but at any rate the American aborigines—including those that did not know metallurgy—waged war long before the arrival of the European invaders.

(The above does not mean that no American aborigines had entered the Age of Metals before the arrival of Europeans. In Porterfield, Kay Marie, 2002, we read: "Although the polar Inuit near Baffin Bay did use meteorites to make iron blades, for the most part, other American Indians did not work with iron (a prerequisite for entering the Iron Age). American Indians did begin making metal tools before Europeans did. The people of the Old Copper Culture in the Great Lakes region of North America 7,000 years ago are considered by many scientists to have been the oldest metal workers in the world. They developed annealing to strengthen the tools they made. Pre-Columbian metal workers invented sophisticated techniques for working with other metals. Pre-contact metallurgists living in what are now Ecuador and Guatemala learned how to work with platinum, a metal that has the extremely high melting point of 3218 degrees by developing a technique called sintering. Europeans were unable to work platinum until the 19th century. Metal workers in other parts of the Americas knew how to solder, could make foil and used rivets to fasten pieces of metal together. In areas where no metal deposits lay close to the surface, American Indians made tools of bone, wood and stone. The blades of their flint surgical instruments were so thin that the incisions they made could not be duplicated until the advent of laser surgery.")

[74] Moreover, beside being aware of the divine in nature and as nature, many aboriginal tribes seem to have been aware that a superficial, essentially mistaken sense of self-identity may conceal our true condition, and, as Taylor reminds us, asserted human beings have two souls: one that is fundamental and real, and another one that is the "trickster," which in his paper he shows to correspond in most respects to identification with the ego (Taylor [2003], p. 66). This may be a distortion, arisen when access to the state of Communion became more difficult and less ubiquitous, of the contrast between realization, in the state of Communion, that there is no individual soul, but only a universal principle (which here is turned into the "real soul"), and that the belief in individuality is no more than a fiction (corresponding to the trickster). There is abundant literature regarding the trickster in transpersonal disciplines; for a short discussion, cf. Krippner (2002).

[75] Cf. note 50 to this chapter.

[76] Indo-Europeans supposedly introduced an extreme androcentrism in Eurasia, and the Semitic peoples supposedly introduced patriarchate as such. At some point both peoples are thought to have found themselves established in arid regions that were not apt for the extensive practice of agriculture, and so they concentrated on cattle breeding and especially on shepherding. It was probably later on that they established themselves in places of difficult access, from which they began raiding their neighbors in order to appropriate their agricultural products, women and riches in general. Thus the gods that arose with the theogenesis seem to have developed into two kinds of gods: one kind represented the state of Communion and became symbols used for gaining access to this state (as was the case with the gods that according to Daniélou (1992), shared the same origins and identity, such as Shiva in India, Dionysus in Greece and Osiris in Egypt; and, as I myself have shown [1997c, 1998a, 1998b, 1999c, 2000b, 2003], also Zurvan in Persia and the Yandag Gyälpo in the Himalayas) and one kind that was invoked in order to obtain supernatural help in the war against enemies (such as the Yaveh of the Semitic peoples—which as Marija Gimbutas [1989] has shown by quoting the oldest invocations and prayers to this deity, originally was a blood-thirsty divinity invoked before combat—and the gods of the Indo-Europeans).

In Capriles (2000b) I suggested that the myth of Cain and Abel may have referred to the relation between the Semitic shepherds, on the one hand, and the agricultural peoples of high antiquity in most of Eurasia, on the other—and that it also applies to the relation between the Indo-European equivalents, or the Semites, and neighboring agricultural peoples. As is proper of the dynamics of the Jungian shadow, which at the time was developing at an extremely rapid pace, the shepherding Semites attributed aggression—which in truth was exerted by the shepherding peoples, which attacked their agricultural counterparts—to Cain as the symbol of the agricultural peoples. Furthermore, the myth itself insists that only blood may wash away a sin, and the blame attributed to Abel was precisely that he was not offering blood to God: on the one hand it presents God as blood-thirsty, as proper of a demonic deity of war and aggression, and on the other it demands for actions that necessarily result in the development of the shadow and therefore of evil (it has been claimed that also the peoples of ancient Eurasia that later on were conquered by Indo-Europeans and Semites carried out animal sacrifices, but the myth of Cain and Abel suggests the opposite—and, at any rate, had agricultural peoples actually carried out animal sacrifices, it is clear that shepherding peoples placed a greater emphasis on the need for these sacrifices, for their diet required a far greater amount of animal slaughtering than did that of agricultural peoples).

For an account of the bellicose character of Indo-Europeans and their religion, cf. Eisler (1987); Bocchi & Ceruti (1993); Gimbutas (1989, 1982). However, the fact I refer to the works by Eisler and Gimbutas does not mean I endorse ecofeminists who posit and eulogize a stage of goddess-worship previously to the worship of male gods, nor does it mean I view goddess worship is the ideal of ecological integration, for I agree with Cauvin (1987, 1998/2000) that the introduction of *both* male gods and female goddesses are the main signs of the "Fall" that resulted in the loss of the sense of divinity of this world and in general of primordial plenitude, equality, harmony and so on, and I also agree with Rosemary Radford-Ruether (1992), that we should not assume that the agricultural peoples of Eurasia that later on were conquered and dominated by the Semitic and Indo-European peoples (such as for example the Sumerians, the Elamite and the Dravidians) were totally non-violent and absolutely egalitarian (socially, economically, politically or sexually), as were human beings in the Golden Age: although violence and verticality were less developed among the agricultural peoples in question, among them these vices and defects had already developed to a considerable extent.

As to the reasons why both Semitics and Indo-Europeans turned into conquerors and dominators, DeMeo (1998) may be right that there was a massive process of desiccation of previously fertile lands, but it seems to me quite likely that this process was produced by the interactions of the inhabitants of those lands with their natural environment (in which a key element may have been the massive breeding of goats and sheep)—and, at any rate, the process of Fall is inherent in the psychophysical constitution of human beings rather than being a product of fortuitous environmental occurrences. Furthermore, at first sight DeMeo does not seem to be a serious researcher—even though some of his critics (for example, Correa & Correa [2002]) do not seem to be any more serious than DeMeo himself.

[77] In Eliade & Couliano (1990), an attempt is made to show that Manicheans would not have been so decidedly antisomatic; however, I believe their religion must be decidedly classed among antisomatic systems.

[78] Though Buddhist systems based on renunciation never posited two substances, one material and the other spiritual, they often represented the body as impure (for an example cf. Shantideva [1996], p. 115). In their turn, though the Jainas did not explicitly assert the physical world to be impure or a source of evil, they posited an ultimate distinction between "living substance" or "soul" (Skt, *jiva*) and "nonliving substance" (Skt., *ajiva*), demanding that whatever had soul be absolutely respected; though this may seem to imply all that had no soul needed not be respected, all that had no soul was full of living substances having soul and so it had to be respected for the latter to be respected.

[79] Since the hand toil that followed the birth of the gods was not a punishment inflicted by an almighty god, like the one Adam and Eve suffered according to the *Book of Genesis*, and in Cauvin's view (1987, 1998/2000) neither was it the result of ecological pressures, but the outcome of the psychological mutation that gave rise to the gods, if Cauvin were right we should be capable to explain the reasons why it occurred. In this case, among the aspects of this mutation that may have been more determinant we may hypothesize the following:

When we uninterruptedly feel separate from the flow of our true condition, leisure, which formerly occupied most of our time, is no longer a precious opportunity for relaxing in the plenitude of the state of Communion and for carrying out a series of gratifying activities; we are bound to project the concepts of

monotony and boredom, which cause us to reject experience, giving rise to unpleasant sensations, which then we may try to avoid by means of arduous and uninterrupted work. (In works about the life of hunter-gatherers and horticulturalists of our time we read that they sometimes feel extreme tedium and world-weariness; for an example, cf. Lizot [1985].) At any rate, when we feel that we are the separate, autonomous sources of our own actions, these actions seem to take place as a result of our own effort; therefore, it seems logical that once we can no longer surpass this illusion, the satisfaction of "natural needs" comes to depend on effort (at any rate, work as a means to an end can only arise once natural spontaneity has been replaced by the illusion of personal agency).

Since we can no longer surpass the illusion of separateness in *aletheia* and thus recover plenitude, sooner or later we may come to believe that that the production of a greater amount of goods by means of agriculture and animal breeding perhaps may allow us to recover it. Etc.

[80] Marx wrote concerning Feuerbach: "With one blow, [Feuerbach] pulverized the contradiction [inherent in idealism] and without circumlocutions... placed materialism on the throne again..." However, Marx also noted that Feuerbach: "stopped halfway; the lower half of him was materialist, the upper half idealist." In this regard, cf. Marx (undated).

It is widely assumed that Marx's system inverted Hegel's in that, among other things, it placed matter at the beginning of the dialectical process, asserted the idea to be a product of the evolution of matter, and set out to explain the material conditions of the evolution of our species. Although in his book *Dialectics of Nature* (1998/2001) Engels transformed Hegel's dialectical idealism into a dialectical materialism, and the resulting system and method is often taken to be Marxist, Marx did not adhere to it. At any rate, Marx made more flexible the schema thesis - antithesis - synthesis-that-becomes-thesis, which for Hegel proceeded automatically (according to some, doing with it precisely what Hegel had criticized in his predecessors and contemporaries). In particular, for Marx there is no "necessity"—not even an internal one—for human and social development to follow any specific schema from beginning to end. Furthermore, though Marx admitted a precedence of the infrastructure over the superstructure or ideology, this did not imply an absolute determinism, for the evolution of the human species is the evolution of the possibilities to influence social structures and thereby influence the mastery that human beings can come to have over themselves (it was mainly Engels who insisted that the superstructure—i.e., ideology—was conditioned by the infrastructure; however, at the end of his life Engels declared that the motor of evolution was actually "the needs of development of the human spirit").

Louis Althusser asserts that Marx failed to carry out the required complete inversion of Hegel because he kept the belief that teleology was at work in the development of our species. Though the view that Marx kept to some extent the belief that teleology was at work in the development of our species, this would not do any harm if it were posited as a narrative, making it clear that it is no more than a narrative. Where Marx and Engels clearly failed was in inverting the Hegelian conception of evolution and history as progress, perfecting and improving.

[81] In Capriles (1994a), I carried out a comprehensive critique of Marxism, involving, among others, that of the aspects listed in note 44 to this chapter. Concerning the particular point under discussion, though Marx and Engels purportedly inverted Hegel's view of history, as stated in the preceding note and elsewhere in this chapter, they failed to carry out a thorough inversion of Hegel's view, for despite the fact that they asserted perfection to lie in the surpassing of the State in all possible forms, and in surpassing private property, the family and so on, rather than in the Prussian State of their time, they kept the basic conception of evolution and history as a process of improvement that would conclude with perfection. Habermas broke with Marx and Engels in many crucial points, but he kept the same belief that evolution and history were a process of progressive improvement. For his part, Wilber produced a system based on an analogy between his own view of ontogenesis (criticized in the preceding chapter of this book) and the views on phylogenesis found in Habermas (1979), and Beck & Cowan (1996).

[82] The Communion state is beyond existence, for it is does not involve that which Heidegger called *ek-sistence* and that Sartre expressed as "being outside one's Self"—and hence the limitless wealth inherent of that condition may not be properly called "existential." However, Walter Weisskopf (1971) coined this term to refer to the subjective sensation of wealth, and Fritjof Capra (1982) made the term so popular that there seems no way to avoid its usage. For an explanation of this concept and its connection with the views of Tibetan Buddhism and Taoism, as well as an in-depth critique of the Marxist view of economic value using at length arguments by Piotr Kropotkin (1943; cf. also Cappelletti [1978])—**who showed value and plusvalue—basis of the Marxist principle of distribution under socialism—to be**

imponderable insofar as they involved the work for producing all that was involved in the process of manufacture, including railways, trucks, roads, machinery, buildings, clothes, and so on to the extent of covering practically all that has been produced by humankind), Joan Robinson, Ivan Iilich and Manfred Max-Neef, as well as Weisskopf and Capra, among several others, cf. Capriles (1994a), Chapter III, "El valor y los valores: crónica de una caída," section "El valor económico."

[83] In 1845 Marx wrote *Die heilige Familie oder Kritik der kritischen Kritik*, *eine Streitschrift gegen Bruno Bauer zur Aufklärung des Publikum über die Illusionen der spekulativen Philosophie und über die Idee des Kommunismus als die Idee des neuen Weltzustandes* (*The Holy Family, or Critique of the Critique. Polemic against Bruno Bauer for the Enlightenment of the Public Concerning the Illusions of Speculative Philosophy and the Idea of Communism as Idea of the New Worldwide State*), and in 1848 Marx and Engels wrote the *Communist Manifesto* (*Manifesto of the Communist Party*).

[84] I am not saying that all of Bachofen's views concerning pre-civilized communities is outright wrong; contrariwise, I believe a sizable portion of it may be correct (even though I really doubt we may speak of matriarchate as such: for my theory of the social position of genders in different stages of the degenerative spiritual and social evolution of humankind, cf. Capriles [1994b]). What I contest is mainly the validity of applying these views to the earliest Germans, for, as indicated in a previous note, Indo-Europeans supposedly introduced an extreme androcentrism in Eurasia (whereas patriarchate as such was supposedly introduced by the Semitic peoples).

[85] See note 50 to this chapter.

[86] When primary process intuition was infallible there was no need for the critical function of secondary process (except perhaps for Awakening, at least to some extent in certain stages). As fallibility developed, the critical function of secondary process became more and more important, though at the same time it introduced a further, major obstacle to Awakening.

[87] Just by the way, Popper questioned the supposed absence of indeterminacies, and particularly of "u-indeterminacies," in classical physics. In order to prove on logical grounds that classical physics is indeterministic insofar as it contains u-indeterminacies, he said theories were indeterministic if at least one event was not completely determined in the sense of being not predictable in all its details (Popper [1950-1951]). He derived this conclusion by showing that no "predictor"—i.e., a calculating and predicting machine, or, in today's terms, a computer—constructed and working on the basis of classical principles, is capable of fully predicting every one of its own future states; nor can it fully predict, or be predicted by, any other predictor with which it be in interaction. Popper's reasoning has been challenged by G. F. Dear on the grounds that the sense in which "self-prediction" was used by Popper to show its impossibility is not the sense in which this notion has to be used in order to allow for the effects of interference (Dear [1961]). Dear's criticism, in turn, has recently been shown to be untenable by W. Hoering (1969) who, on the basis of Leon Brillouin's (1964) penetrating investigations, argued, "although Popper's reasoning is open to criticism he arrives at the right conclusion."

[88] More recently, Jacques Derrida (1967) "deconstructed" Claude Lévi-Strauss' theories concerning the secondary role of written language with regard to spoken language, and the role of the former in the relation between the development of writing and that of evil, violence, social stratification, privilege, domination, enslavement, proletarization, state control and so on, by showing the subterfuges Lévi-Strauss used to demonstrate his theories, and in particular how he consciously ignored the manifestations of violence in the Nambiquara society, with the aim of showing that Lévi-Strauss's attempts to ratify the scientific credentials of his own theory of writing were characterized by a tremendous lack of rigor, even though he pretended to have surpassed the categories and abstractions of the traditional philosophical discourse. Derrida's extension of the field of writing—both empirical and essential—to a great extent intended to make evident the fundamental ethnocentrism of the Lévi-Strauss' distinction between literary and nonliterary cultures. Thereby Derrida supposedly was attacking not only ethnology—the very object of research of which (the nonliterary culture) was founded on this distinction, and the regenerating mission of which lay precisely in its criticism of ethnocentrism—but the very heart of the "scientific" project and enterprise. Thereafter Derrida applied his method profusely, and in fact it may be applied to most scientific theories and constructions in order to show them to be baseless. Derrida also applied his method to philosophy, and the results were practically the same as in the case of scientific theories. Derrida views all philosophical constructions as candidates for deconstruction, except when these constructions present themselves as mythology and relate, in which case they can hardly be candidates for deconstruction.

[89] Tim Maudlin says there are two Kuhns, one moderate and the other one unruly, which are mixed up in *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Sokal & Bricmont [1999], p. 85 of the Spanish version; the discussion of Kuhn goes from p. 82 to p. 88 of the Spanish version). Though there seems to be no solid basis for this conclusion, Sokal and Bricmont are right in their objection that, if the inductions based on the available data cannot give rise to trustworthy results in physics or biology, then they cannot give rise to trustworthy conclusions in the story of science, either. However, Kuhn's arguments and conclusions are less liable to ideological manipulation than those of experimental science (in experimentation, the design of the experiment is determined by the results the scientist expects to find, and it is he himself who does the observations, which may also be conditioned by his or her expectations; in the case of the history of science, what is interpreted is the records elaborated by the scientists themselves after having had to modify their theories or paradigms, or the records elaborated by historians on the basis of these records—which are far less liable to ideological manipulation than the design and observation of experiments carried out by the scientists themselves), and even if we are not allowed to take them to be "hard facts," we can use them as provisional, disposable antidotes to the belief that the results of the "hard sciences" are "hard facts;" in other words, we may use them in the way in which below in this section I propose that the conclusions of the hard sciences may be used as antidotes to the substantialistic, discrete views of common sense.

[90] Though some of the criticisms of Feyerabend carried out in Sokal & Bricmont (1999, pp. 88-94 of the Spanish version), are to the point, they do not invalidate Feyerabend's general judgment on the sciences, which is equally to the point, and they do not justify the deriding, mocking tone of Sokal and Bricmont's evaluation of the German-born philosopher of science. For example, Sokal and Bricmont are right in noting that from the premise "all methodologies have their limits" it does not follow that "everything goes;" however, from this, the conclusion they draw with regard to Feyerabend—that he is the buffoon of the court of the philosophy of science—does not follow either. This is not the place to discuss the criticisms Sokal and Bricmont make of Feyerabend; suffice to say that, provided we are able to discriminate between founded and unfounded criticisms, Sokal and Bricmont's discussion of Feyerabend may be helpful to place the author in perspective and determine which of his arguments may be accepted and which must be rejected.

[91] In Sokal & Bricmont (1999), Deleuze is criticized in two different sections of the book; however, the theory according to which philosophy and the sciences are "more than ideologies" is not among the objects of this criticism.

[92] It seems to be no coincidence that Erasmus ended up confronting Luther and the Reformation, which, as I tried to show in Capriles (1994a), prepared the ground for the development of material "progress" and the implementation of the modern project in general.

[93] It is significant that, in the same paragraph, Erasmus speaks of God as the "great architect of the Universe" and quotes (saint) Bernard of Clairvaux, who was a cousin of the founder of the Knights Templar.

[94] A civilization over 12,000 years old was discovered at the beginning of the 21st century, submerged just in front of the Western Indian coasts; however, since its exploration has not gone far enough, there is no way to determine the interests behind it. In the building of the Egyptian pyramids an instrumental interest seems apparent, but it is with the Pythagoreans of Alexandria, less than two and a half millennia ago, that the pace of development of instrumental science and technology knew a more marked increase. Then the triumph of Christianity produced a recess in the development of instrumental science and technology, until the Middle Ages began to dream of the golem, which was developed in the last five centuries, since the time when the Modern Age is supposed to have begun.

[95] The advertent reader may have realized that, in my view, the roots of inherently instrumental science and technology go much farther back in time than Marcuse believed, and their development in the course of the present time-cycle is inevitable and has a key function in the *reductio ad absurdum* of all that must go out of human evolution.

[96] Cf. note 50 to this chapter.

[97] Berman (1984) based this concept of Max Weber's idea of "*die Entzauberung der Welt*" or the "disenchantment of the world," which in its turn had precedents one century before in Schiller's concept of "*die Entgöterung der Natur*" or the "disdeification of nature." However, if we understand the term "disdeification of nature" in the sense of nature ceasing to be perceived as the direct manifestation of the divine, rather than in the sense of ceasing to perceive it as being filled with deities, then this process began much earlier than Schiller thought: the first major step in it may have been the one that gave rise to

the theogenesis reflected in the manifestation of the gods in art discussed by Jacques Cauvin (1987, 1998/2000). In its turn, the disenchantment of the world seems to have begun when human beings moved beyond the pancommunicative stage, ceasing to perceive the phenomena of nature as having personality. (CHECK WHETHER THIS NOTE IS NOT REPEATED.)

[98] According to Marcuse, this change in the interest at the root of science would carry with it key changes in its context, for its hypotheses, without thereby losing their rational character, would develop in the essentially different experimental context of a pacified world; consequently, science would arrive at essentially different concepts of nature and establish essentially different facts.

[99] With regard to the views Marcuse expressed in ch. 6 of Marcuse (1964) and very briefly reviewed in other endnotes to this chapter, Habermas (1984) admitted that modern natural sciences are inherently committed to a view of nature as an object to be manipulated and controlled, and that a science of human beings based on the model of the natural sciences will be equally committed to a view of humans as objects to be manipulated and controlled; furthermore, he partly admits that this implies a necessary relation between the scientific domination of nature and the scientific domination of humans. However, Habermas does not admit that modern natural science is historically specific and not the only form that science can take, or that the liberation of both humans and nature requires a new science and technology grounded in a different interest. This is connected with the fact that he asserts that nature does not act as an interlocutor with whom human beings can maintain communicative relationships, for it does not and cannot reply to our messages. However, it is a fact that in the pan-communicative stage human beings perceived natural phenomena and related to them as though they were subjects, and, as we have seen, their interventions in the natural environment improved biodiversity (as shown in the regard to Amazonian aborigines in Descola [1996]), whereas in the pan-instrumental stage the interventions of human beings devastate the ecosphere (as shown by the self-destruction of so many civilizations reported in Dale & Carter [1955], and the mortal ecological crisis we have produced in our time). And, in fact, nature talks back to us, for it retaliates against our instrumental interventions with natural disasters, and it rewards the communicative interventions of aborigines with negentropy. Furthermore, in my own terminology and worldview, the essential characteristic of communicative relations does not lie in the responses or lack of responses on the part of our interlocutor, but in *our own* attitude: in them we act as though relating with a subject, whereas in instrumental relations we act as though relating with essents lacking subjectivity and the capacity to feel pleasure and pain.

[100] In Illich (1971), we read:

“Some (institutions) have developed in such a way that they characterize and define our time; others are more modest and pass, so to speak, unnoticed. The first seem to be in charge of the manipulation of human beings; we shall call them ‘manipulative’ institutions and we shall place them, for the clarity of this explanation, on the right of the institutional fan or spectrum; on the left, we shall place those which, on the contrary, make human activities easier. Let us be content with defining them as ‘open’ and uncontriving...

“On both extremes we can observe the presence of institutional services; however, on one side, we face a contrived manipulation which causes the client to undergo advertisement, aggression, indoctrination or electric shocks. On the other side, the service represents increased possibilities in the frame of defined limits, while the client remains independent. On the right, institutions tend to become complex, in so far as their method of production carries with it a previous definition and the need to convince the consumer that he or she cannot live without the offered product or service, which causes the budgets [of those institutions] to increase ceaselessly. On the left, the institution presents itself rather as a network to facilitate communication or cooperation among the clients who take the initiative [of using them]. “

I think the discoveries made by Foucault and Deleuze can help us improve the above criterion. If we are to decide whether an institution—for example, the fire brigade—is located toward the left, the center or the right of the institutional spectrum, we must observe its structure as well. The fire brigade is organized after a military model which conditions the experience of its members—the use and disposition of their space, time and knowledge—and that of the people who interact with them, precisely as required by the power structures of contemporary societies. Therefore, though other institutions are far more to the right than the fire brigade, the latter is in a sense a “right wing institution:” it helps its members and those with whom they interact to function within ever more complex and all-controlling power structures, and facilitates the ever more efficient use of space and time necessary for the development of modern organization (such as capitalism or, some time ago, the systems of openly dictatorial Marxist States).

According to this criterion, a genuine left wing institution would be, for example, a Commune in which each and every member can organize her or his own space, time and knowledge at will—and, ultimately, transcend space, time and knowledge—in so far as he or she does his or her share of the common work in the Community.

[101] Also Islam martyred and killed many saints in the name of Muslim orthodoxy; one example is that of the great Sufi master Mansur el-Hallaj, whose martyrdom and death was ordered by the Caliph at the instigation of Sufi master Junayd of Baghdad—who, by the way, is held in great esteem by members of the Traditionalist Movement who follow the Muslim line instituted by René Guénon.

[102] This chi phowa (*'chi pho ba*) or transference of world involves the transformation of the demon mind into divine mind; cf. David-Neel & Lama Yongden (1981), pp. 268-271.

[103] This is the school of systems thinking that was further developed by Gregory Bateson, Ilya Prigogine, Humberto Maturana, Francisco Varela and various others of the thinkers taken as a model by the advocates of the New Paradigm, which from the very beginning dealt with the self-organization of living systems. The alternative school is that of John von Neumann, which was mechanist, and was based on a system of input-output and linear thinking. Cf. Capra, Fritjof, 1986.

[104] As Fritjof Capra (1975/1983) noted—and as Alan Watts had given to understand long before Capra—our current problems arise from a "crisis of perception". Human beings have long suffered from fragmentary perception and delusion, but these, on the one hand, became ever more pronounced as the time cycle unfolded, and, on the other hand, attained ever greater power to tamper with Nature—thus achieving their *reductio ad absurdum* in the multi-leveled ecological crisis that we face. Changing our ways of thinking would not be enough if our experience kept being fragmented and our basic drives and impulses did not charge radically.

[105] In Díaz (1989), we read:

"...a paradigm that puts in the first place values of growth that are not so much quantitative as qualitative; [which does not place first] consume but the quality of life, the care of the environment, the satisfaction that each [has fulfilled her or his] needs for freedom, culture, peace, ecolog[ical balance], etc."

Professor Díaz is basing himself on Offe (1985).

[106] According to Luhmann, systems theories of society cannot include the occurrences taking place within the bodies and minds of those who take part in the interactions that make up the social system, for:

"Communications presuppose awareness states of conscious systems, but conscious states cannot become social and do not enter the sequence of communicative operations as a part of them; they remain for the social system environmental states." (Luhmann [1990], p. 16).

Thus Luhmann says systems theories of society should deal with the interactions between individuals but exclude all references to the actor or agent. Since an agent deprived of body and mind is no more than a fiction or a concept, and there can be no action without an agent, Luhmann concludes that it is not admissible to speak of communicative action: "Communication cannot be defined as communicative action because this would require an actor hardly thinkable without body and mind." (Luhmann [1990], p. 6; by "communication" Luhmann means "interactions" or "exchange of information:" he is saying that interactions or exchanges of information may never be understood in terms of Habermas' concept of communicative action, apparently on the grounds that, since all action implies an actor or agent, but his systemic approach to society precludes considering the actor or agent, the concept of action of one or another kind is inadmissible to systems theories of the kind he advocates. Habermas, instead, realizes that unfortunately a great deal of human interaction is nowadays instrumental, and proposes that all interactions between human beings should be communicative—or, if necessary, emancipatory.)

The above quotation from Luhmann is an instance of the fallacy of *ignoratio elenchi*. From the premise that we should not take human actors or agents into account it does not follow that when we consider social interactions we are forbidden to determine whether the structure and function of these interactions is instrumental, communicative or emancipatory (which would be achieved by reading in the interactions the implicit attitudes of the parts, in order to establish whether those interactions are structured as though a subject were dealing with another subject which must be considered and respected as such or, quite to the contrary, as though a subject were treating a mere object as something to be manipulated which deserves neither consideration nor respect), for this would not imply including in the field of study the subjects of the interaction. Besides, if we conceded that the exclusion of subjects forbids us from reading into interactions the implicit attitude of each part toward the other, in the systemic theory of law we would also be forbidden from considering—as Luhmann does—the "expectations of the parts" or any

other factor depending on consciousness (even when these expectations are explicitly manifest in interactions).

The fact that Luhmann's theory rejects the concept of "communicative action" and gives the term "communication" a meaning more or less equivalent to the one Bateson gives the term "messages," makes his theory quite suitable for instrumental manipulation. For his part, Habermas is wrong when, in Luhmann & Habermas (1971), he takes for granted that nonsystemic theories of society as they exist today may manage not to be dehumanizing, and affirms that, on the contrary, the application of systems theories to society must always be dehumanizing and translate itself into social technology: in terms of the perspective of the book the reader has in her or his hands, presently all sciences are dehumanizing and manipulative, but it would be utterly wrong to think that systemic theories of society must necessarily be more dehumanizing and manipulative than other theories of society.

Systems theories are suitable for expressing nonsubstantialistic worldviews and for showing the illusion of substantiality to be but an illusion; however, nonsubstantialism does not in any sense imply the dehumanization of individuals. Quite on the contrary, nonsubstantialistic worldviews, provided that they derive from the realization of insubstantiality in Communion and are elements of a really effective set of skillful means for accessing the state of Communion and stabilizing this state (as is the case with the philosophy of Nagarjuna and the higher vehicles of Buddhism), are more effective than other worldviews in leading human beings to deal with other human beings communicatively, fully respecting their subjectivity. This is so because, as we have seen, only from Communion can there arise a genuine communicative, respectful attitude, both toward other individuals and toward the rest of the universe.

[107] For a more complete and thorough criticism of Luhmann's theories cf. the three works of mine (two of them with Mayda Hočevar) mentioned just before the call to this note, as well as Maturana (1985), and Rodríguez (1987).

[108] Je Tsongkhapa, founder of the Gelugpa Tibetan Buddhist School, insisted that the system of "Thoroughly Nonabiding Madhyamikas," rather than being the true *Prasangika* system, was a distortion of *Madhyamaka* touching on the fringes of nihilism. However, in Capriles (2005), and also in the upcoming definitive version in print form of Capriles (2004), I demonstrated that it is Tsongkhapa's system that is not that of the true Prasangikas, but a misinterpretation of *Prasangika* thought based on the practice of a *Swatantrika* method, and provided substantial evidence suggesting that the true *Prasangika* system is that of the "Thoroughly Nonabiding Madhyamikas."

[109] In Tibet, Gelugpa interpreters of *Prasangika* philosophy in general rejected the use of scientific views and in general of all kings of autonomous theses; however, Tibetan *Mahamadhyamika* Masters insisted this was an error, for when dealing with relative truth it was necessary to accept also the plausible views of systems other than common sense, and in the refutation of relative truth with regard to the ultimate it was as valid to use the views of common sense as the plausible views of systems other than common sense. Of course, before globalization, views other than common sense changed as new authors wrote new treatises, and after globalization, the sciences change as new paradigms and pieces of knowledge replace old ones; however, at any moment we can use the prevailing views so long as we do not take them to be absolutely true.

The above approach was defended by authors as varied as the eighth Karmapa, Mikyo Dorje (*mi bskyod rdo rje*), and Ju Mipham (*'ju mi pham 'jam dbyangs rnam rgyal*, 1846-1912) Rinpoche.

[110] Einstein's theories imply that the entities of our experience not to exist substantially, insofar as they show them not to be in themselves separate from the rest of the field of our experience—which would hold just the same regardless of whether those entities and their subatomic structure as studied by physicists through their scientific instruments were part of a material world existing externally to and independently of our experience, or whether they existed exclusively in our own experience. In fact, according to Einstein's field theory, entities are not in themselves separate from the rest of the universal energy field: this theory pictures the universe as an undivided, continuous energy field, and notes that there is nothing different from the field, nor is there a gap in the field, that separates entities from the rest of the field. And if entities are not in themselves separate (our singling them out for perception being what causes them to appear as separate), they cannot be considered to be substances.

Aristotle developed different concepts of substance in different works, one of them being that of "sum of matter and form." What happens if we resort to this Aristotelian concept of substance? In terms of this criterion, for something to be a substance it will have to conserve both its form and the matter constituting it (in fact, if an entity exchanges with its environment the matter that constitutes it, then it

cannot be said not to depend on anything else than itself to be what it is, for it depends on matter that presently is not part of itself in order to continue to be itself in the future). However, so long as an entity conserves the matter that constitutes it, we will have the same substance even if this matter changes its state and by so doing changes its form in a predictable way; for example, water loses its liquid form when it freezes and becomes ice, or when it evaporates and becomes vapor; however, so long as it conserves the matter that constitutes it, and so long as it does not become something different from water, ice or water vapor, it will have to be considered to be the same substance. According to Albert Einstein's Field Theory, subatomic particles, which result from the polarization and extreme concentration of the energy of the universal electromagnetic field, do not conserve the matter/energy that makes them up, for they are made of the energy of the area of the field through which they seem to be passing (just as a wave in the ocean is made out of the water of the area of the ocean through which it seems to be passing); therefore, they cannot be considered to be substances in the Aristotelian sense just considered. And if the particles constituting the bigger entities formed by their combinations do not conserve their matter and hence cannot be said to be substances, the latter cannot be said to conserve their matter and cannot be said to be substances either.

[111] The paper in which John Bell expressed his findings was written in 1964, but was published in the *Review of Modern Physics* in 1966.

[112] Bateson (1972) noted that in order not to include or exclude items not belonging to the logical type being considered, one had to exclude all such items from consideration, which meant that one was excluding them in order not to exclude them. Furthermore, this implies that, when dealing with the class to which x belongs, whatever does not belong to the same class as x cannot be considered either as x or as non-x, which violates the principle of the excluded third, the excluded middle or noncontradiction—which is what the theory of logical types was intended to keep in place. However, if we regard the theory of logical types as a mere convention necessary for resolving practical problems, rather than as an attempt to substantiate the supposedly ultimate character of Aristotelian logic, then is fulfills its purpose—and Bohm's theory incurs in a fragrant breach of conventional logic for not respecting the rules of the theory in question.

[113] I find it pertinent to note at this point that one thing is the error Kant objected to in Leibniz, which consists in explaining the phenomenal level of reality as resulting from the relations (which by their very nature are phenomenal) between entities of a wholly nonphenomenal level of reality, and something quite different is the physical theory according to which quarks do not occupy any space, and yet the whole of physical reality is made up by them and the relations between them: quarks are supposed to have mass, and therefore cannot be regarded as being nonphenomenal, even though entities having mass yet not occupying any space are hardly conceivable by common sense, which works on the basis of discrete reality. I also find it pertinent to note that the explanation of the four dharmadhatus in the *Avatamsakasutra* and the Hwa-yen school is different both from Leibniz's error and from the New Physics' conception of quarks: the four dharmadhatus involve four different perspectives on a single level of reality, which must go together and be explained side by side insofar as they are the four possible, different yet mutually complementary viewpoints on the same reality, all of which must necessarily be taken into account if we are to avoid the error of taking one single perspective as the only, total, absolute truth concerning that reality.

[114] The method of *isosthenia* or "balancing truth," which consists in neutralizing delusory adherence to a particular viewpoint by affirming, as an other-directed assertion, a related yet opposite viewpoint (and possibly providing evidence substantiating the latter), seems to fully correspond to the method taught by Hui-neng, Sixth Patriarch of *Ch'an* Buddhism in China, as a conceptual way toward the nonconceptual realization of *Madhyamaka*, which was described above in the regular text of this section.

An example of this method is the dialogue referred in Capriles (2004) (adapted from Blofeld [1962]) and other of my writings, between *Ch'an* Master Ta-chu Hui-hai and a Tripitaka Master who tried to ridicule him by asking him whether changes occurred in the absolute condition of Buddha nature (*bhutatathata*). Instead of replying that they didn't occur (which he knew was the answer that the Tripitaka Master considered correct, for the *bhutatathata* may be said to be the absolute truth, and according to the Mahayana from the standpoint of absolute truth no changes occur), Hui-hai stated: "yes, they do." Triumphantly, the Tripitaka Master decreed: "Venerable Master, you are wrong" Hui-hai replied with a question: "Isn't the true nature or condition of the Tripitaka Master the *bhutatathata* (i.e., the Buddha-nature)?" The Tripitaka Master answered: "Indeed, it is the nature of all of us." Hui-hai then added:

“Well, if you sustain that it does not change, you must be a very ignorant king of monk. Surely you should have heard that a wise man can transform the three poisons (hatred, desire and ignorance) into the three accumulative precepts, transmute the six sensory perceptions (the ones that take place through the five senses and the one that occurs through the mental consciousness) into the six divine perceptions, passions into Awakening and delusion into wisdom. If nonetheless you suppose the absolute to be incapable of change, then you—a Master of the Tripitaka—are in truth a follower of the heterodox sect that posits a plurality of substances and asserts that things come about on the basis of their own supposedly individual self-natures.” The Master of the Tripitaka had no alternative but to concede: “If you put it that way, then the absolute does undergo changes.” However, instead of agreeing, Hui-hai upbraided him, saying: “However, in your case, to sustain that the absolute undergoes changes is equally heretic.” In despair, the Tripitaka Master retorted: “Venerable Master, first you said that the absolute undergoes changes, and now you said it doesn’t. What is then the correct answer?” Hui-hai concluded: “The one who has realized his own nature, which may be compared to a Mani pearl that reflects all appearances (without adhering to them and without them sticking to it), will not fall into delusion no matter whether he states that the absolute does undergo changes, or that the absolute does not undergo changes. But those who have not realized this nature, upon hearing about the changing absolute, cling to the concept of mutability, getting caught in it, and upon hearing that the absolute doesn’t change, adhere to the concept of immutability, being stuck in it. (And this clinging to concepts is the very root of the basic delusion that Mahayana Buddhism invites us to overcome.)

Another example of it is a dialogue composed by *Ch’an* Master Ta-chu Hui-hai, in which an imaginary interlocutor asked him “What is the Middle Way,” and he replied: “The extremes.” When I found a Danish Vajra-brother called Jakob standing on the back of the Nyingmapa Buddhist temple in Clement Town (Dehradhun, H.P., India) in the late 1970s, I asked him: “What are you doing here?” He replied: “Relatively I am here; ultimately I am not here.” At which I retorted: “Actually, it is relatively that you are not here, because the relative does not truly exist, and it is absolutely that you are here, for everything is the absolute.”

Perhaps the most impressive usage of this method by a Buddhist Master may have taken place when Milarepa was confronted by a Kadampa Geshe who was jealous of the quantity of disciples that visited the Kagyü hermit. In order to ridicule him before his disciples, and thinking Mila had no knowledge whatsoever of philosophy, the Geshe asked him whether space was obstructing or nonobstructing—to which the great repa replied, “obstructing.” When the Geshe triumphantly decreed, “you are wrong,” Mila took a walking stick and began banging it against empty space—which responded as though it were solid and therefore obstructing. Then the Geshe asked Milarepa whether matter was obstructing or nonobstructing. The hermit replied “nonobstructing.” When the Geshe triumphantly decreed, “you are wrong,” Mila passed his hand through the wall of the cave in which he was sitting. At this, the Geshe became his disciple.

The method of *isosthenia* is simply the application, in a dialogue between individuals, of the *via oppositionis*: the “way of the opposition of mutually contradictory concepts” (a concept that has been emphasized in Elorduy [1983]), which the Madhyamikas seem to have applied as a key contributory condition toward the spontaneous collapse of the delusorily valued conceptual limits their school calls “extremes,” and therefore toward gaining access to the limitless condition that it calls the Middle Way. When the *via oppositionis* is applied in speech or writing by a single person who combines contradictory terms in order to contribute toward the collapse in the reader or listener of the habit of combining delusory valued concepts into complex meanings that are taken to be absolutely true or false, so that the veil constituted by the net of delusorily valued thoughts may fall and as a result the true nature of reality may become evident, we have the very essence of *Madhyamika* dialectic as manifest in the works by Nagarjuna, Aryadeva and the *Madhyamika* Prasangikas.

This application of the *via oppositionis* also seems to be the very essence of many of the verses in Lao-tzu’s *Tao-Te-Ching*. As noted in the regular text, there are many other fragments by Heraclitus that simultaneously assert opposite views, and which rather than being attempts to destroy the Principle of Non-contradiction, Law of the Excluded Third or Law of the Excluded Middle (as those who have interpreted Heraclitus as though he were Hegelian have taken them to be), are part of a strategy for breaking the reader’s delusory valuation-absolutization of thought that, as we have seen, is at the root of the delusion that the Buddha called *avidya* and that the Ephesian called *lethe*, and that causes people to hold to one conceptual extreme as true, and reject the other extreme as false (a strategy that would work only on those who are logically bound by the Principle of Non-contradiction, Law of the Excluded

Middle or Law of the Excluded Third). Concerning the method of *isosthenia* properly speaking, it was popularized by Pyrrho of Elis (c. 360-c.270 BC), the founder of the Skeptic School, who purportedly received it from Anaxarchus of Abdera while both of them traveled with Alexander's army through Asia. It is claimed that Anaxarchus in turn received it from his teacher Democritus of Abdera (c.460-c.370 BC), but there is no proof whatsoever that the method was actually taught by Democritus, and therefore the possibility cannot be discarded that Pyrrho and Anaxarchus may have received it from Asian sages during their travels. At any rate, it seems certain that the method existed in Greece long before Pyrrho and Anaxarchus traveled through Asia, for the "sophist" Protagoras (c.490-c.421 BC) is reputed to have applied it. In fact, Protagoras may have been justifying this method when, as Diogenes Laërtius tells us, he asserted, "...concerning any matter (*pragma*), there are two mutually opposed discourses (*logoi*)," and noted he considered both as being equally valid. (However, it is impossible for us to discern after nearly two and a half millennia whether Protagoras was a link in the venerable lineage of philosophers who used the method in question to lead individuals beyond grasping at thoughts and thus into the realization of the ultimate, unborn nature, or, as held by the detractors of the sophists, whether he was teaching his pupils techniques for the manipulation of the masses in the *agora* and/or means for the pacification of their consciences so that they could pursue illegitimate purposes without feeling remorse.)

In turn, in his treatise *On Nonbeing*, Gorgias of Leontini set out to destroy Eleatic ontology by expounding his renowned there doctrines: (1) Nothing exists; (2) If something existed, it could not be known; and (3) Even if (something existed and) could be known, it could not be expressed in words. "Nothing exists" could as well mean the same as in the *Prajñaparamita Sutras* and in the original *Madhyamika* literature: that nothing is self-existent. If this were so, the other two statements would be rhetorical assertions emphasizing the fact that conceptual knowledge cannot correspond in an absolutely precise way to what it interprets, and that it is impossible to express the nature of reality, or even its structure and function, in an absolutely precise way. However, we face the same problem again, for we cannot know whether this is so, or whether Gorgias was an opportunist who taught techniques for the manipulation of the masses in the *agora* and for the pacification of the consciences of people pursuing illegitimate purposes.

In general, scholars take the above statements by Gorgias and Protagoras to imply that they held mutually contradictory views; however, a *Madhyamika* would agree to the statements of both, for it is precisely insofar as no conceptual position can be absolutely true with regard to any given object, that mutually contradictory conceptual positions can be valid and held to be conventionally true with regard to an object. And, in fact, I suspect that Gorgias may have been saying precisely that no conceptual position can be absolutely true with regard to any given object, whereas Protagoras may have been saying that mutually contradictory conceptual positions can be valid and held to be conventionally true with regard to any given object—in which case both of them would have been expressing the very same view.

Another sophist, Cratylus, was renowned for raising his finger and remaining silent upon being questioned. He claimed to be a follower of Heraclitus, and concerning the Ephesian's statement that one cannot enter the same river twice, for new waters overflow (fr. DK 91), he asserted that one cannot enter the same river even once, for even while one enters the river, new waters have already overflowed (and therefore there is no continuous river that may be entered). (Plato's assertion in his Cratylus that the said "sophist" believed everything had a right name of its own seems to contradict this interpretation of his thought. However, in general Plato misrepresented Cratylus and other of the ancient philosophers: even his depiction of Socrates is not the most plausible one, for it does not seem congruent with the renowned statement "l only know I know nothing;" furthermore, the Cynics' depiction of Socrates provides a more plausible explanation of his death sentence.)

Neo-Academic philosopher Arcesilas (c.315-c.240 BC) introduced the method of *isosthenia* into the Academy (where it was said to be "of Socratic inspiration," either because Socrates actually applied it, or in order to valorize it by ascribing it to the venerated teacher of the Academy's founder). It was another neo-Academic, Carneades, who left as his legacy to us another, less well-known application in speech or writing of the *via oppositionis* by a single person already mentioned in the regular text (which, however, this author is not sure may be therapeutic, and, contrariwise, thinks in some cases may be dangerous): the *argumentum in utramque partem* or "argument in favor of both sides," which consists in developing an argument convincingly until the listeners or readers have been persuaded by it, and then developing the opposite argument in an equally convincing way.

Therefore the possibility may not be discarded that Heraclitus, Democritus, Anaxarchus and Pyrrho, Protagoras, Gorgias and Cratylus, Arcesilas and perhaps even Carneades, and quite possibly Anthistenes

and the Cynics (or at least some of these) may have been links in a wisdom tradition somehow similar to that of the Madhyamikas, to that of *Ch'an* or *Zen*, and to that of Dzogchen. In fact, one may suspect such a tradition may have existed within the genuine, ancient Dionysian tradition, which as we have seen Alain Daniélou (1992) showed it to be one with the Shaiva tradition of India and the Egyptian cult of Osiris, and, as shown in Capriles (2000b) and in other works by this author, was one with Zurvanism, Taoism of Unorigination [the one represented by Lao-tzu, Chuang-tzu, Lieh-tzu and the Masters of Huainan, and quite likely by Chuan Chen Taoism as discussed in Liu I-ming, 1988, and Reid, D., 2003] and ancient Bön—the latter of which, probably since around 1800 BC, has had its own Dzogchen tradition and its own Mantric teachings (Namkhai Norbu [1996, 1997a, 1999/2001, 2004], etc.). If this were so, Cratylus raising his finger in reply to the questions of his interlocutors may have had the same meaning as the identical behavior of *Ch'an* Master Chu-ti, who succeeded to T'ien-lung (cf. Cleary & Cleary [1977], vol. I, Nineteenth Case, pp. 123-128). (With regard to Chu-ti's method, consider the following: "When he was near death, Chu-ti said to his assembly, 'I attained T'ien Lung's one-finger *Ch'an* and have used it all my life without exhausting it. Do you want to understand?' He raised his finger, then died." [*Ibidem*, p. 125.])

Since we have enough fragments of Heraclitus' book as to assume he may have been a representative of a genuine wisdom-tradition (which, as we have seen, must have been the Dionysian tradition), it may be useful to note that the Skeptics traced their tradition to Heraclitus. As noted in Cappelletti (1969):

"Ænesidemus, the most radical critic of the principle of causality in antiquity, ends up considering the [method of the] Skeptics as a propaedeutics to the philosophy of Heraclitus, in which paradoxically he sees the metaphysical foundation to the epistemological doctrine of the former (Braga [1931]). Another Skeptic, Sextus Empiricus, refers quite extensively to the epistemology and the psychology of Heraclitus in his work *Adversus mathematicos*, where he quotes the initial paragraph of his book."

All of the above is considered in detail in my work in progress *Greek Philosophy and the East*. For a published explanation of the relationship between Shaivism and ancient Bön, cf. the notes to Vol. I of this book; for a more detailed explanation cf. Capriles (work in progress 3, work in progress 4) (note that Shiva's dwelling place is Mount Kailash in Tibet, at the foot of which around 1,800 BC the great Bönpo Master Shenrab Miwoche taught the Dzogchen tradition of the Zhang Zhung Nyengyü [*rdzogs pa chen po zhang zhung snyan brgyud*]). Concerning the relationship between the Greek Skeptics and the *Madhyamaka* School of Philosophy, the reader may consult McEviley (1982); Capriles (1994a, 2004, work in progress 3); Gómez de Liaño (1998); Carré (1999, 2001).

To conclude, it should not be assumed that all thinkers of East and West associated with the *via oppositionis* necessarily had the same wisdom and used it in the same way. The problem is too ample to be dealt with here; it will be further considered in my work in progress *Greek Philosophy and the East*.

(Concerning Anthistenes and the Cynics, I have already noted that it is clear that the latter had an *askesis* that aimed at the liberation of conditioned perceptions; if it were true that Diogenes was a disciple of Anthistenes and that the latter passed down a series of doctrines and practices to the former, then there could hardly be any doubt that Anthistenes' assertion of the illegitimacy, both of negation [his phrase *ouk estin antilegein* had been used by Protagoras], and of definition in terms of the syllogism "a is b," were "in the thread of Ariadna" of the ancient soteriological tradition that I assume would have been somehow akin to *Madhyamaka* philosophy. For an explanation of these two theses of Anthistenes' in terms of the relationship between the computations of the two cerebral hemispheres and between the two processes established in Freud's *Project* of 1895, cf. Capriles (1999b, work in progress 3.)

115 As will be shown below in the regular text, signs "mean" by differing from other signs; however, for Derrida the key point is that they may differ, opening a space from that which they represent, and they may also defer, opening up a temporal chain, or participating in temporality—a double sense emphasized by Derrida's neologism. Likewise, the term *clôture* or "closure," in the already defined sense of "closing in on the outside" of the *logos* (again in a non-Heraclitian sense of the term) within the boundaries of a way of thinking and attributing meaning, refers to a space of shared, restricted meanings (comparable to the enclosed space that results from building an encircling fence, or to a monastery or convent that is off limits to the laity)—which theoretically seems to be conceived as being capable of continuing indefinitely. In fact, in Derrida (1972b), p. 23, he tells us:

"What is caught in the de-limited *clôture* (closure) may continue indefinitely."

However, nothing that is conditioned, compounded, constructed or born may continue indefinitely; in particular, according to Nietzsche, the development of modernity is bound to cause nihilism *qua* the

moral Christian and the metaphysical Platonic interpretations of the world (which in Derridian terms are spatial *clôtures*) to reduce themselves to absurdity (this is not Nietzsche's terminology but my own; at any rate, as will be shown below in the regular text, according to Nietzsche this is due to the fact that these interpretations of the world carry in themselves the seeds of their own destruction, to a great extent because one of their primary values is Truth, and when the quest for Truth is applied to these two interpretations of the world, at some point they are revealed to be untrue)—which in Nietzsche's view will give rise to radical nihilism. Active radical nihilism, in particular, involves the imperative of breaking what Derrida calls *clôture* (in the spatial sense, and as a "closing in on the outside" of the *logos* [in a non-Heraclitian sense] within the boundaries of a way of thinking and attributing meaning); however, according to Derrida we must attempt this fracture without believing that philosophy is going to be "surpassed." At any rate, the important point is that breaking the *clôture* or closure in the spatial sense of the term involves the *clôture* or closure, *in the temporal sense of the term*, of the space of shared, restricted meanings: here *clôture* has the sense it acquires when referring to the act of terminating a process, of definitively ending a state of affairs (as, for example, in "*la clôture d'un débat*" or "*la clôture d'une conference*"); it has to do with completion, and refers to a condition prior to the end, to the bringing of a process to its conclusion. In Derrida (1967), p. 14, we read:

"The unity of all that is noted today through the most diverse concepts of science and writing is in principle more or less secret but always indefectibly, determined by a historic-metaphysical epoch of which we only glimpse the *clôture*. We do not say the end."

Thus in the temporal sense *clôture* refers to the surpassing of something, which is *not* merely its coming to an end. And *qua* surpassing that does not represent the end of the surpassed (but *only in this particular regard*) it has been shown to have something in common with concepts so different from each other as Hegel's *Aufhebung* or sublation, Heidegger's *Vollendung* (completion) and the phenomenological double negation discussed in this book (which was illustrated with the double negation in Sartre's bad faith and Laing's spiral of pretences). However, this acceptation of Derrida's concept seems to coincide in more senses with Heidegger's concept, for the notion of *Überwindung der Metaphysik*, the "overcoming of metaphysics" (in Heidegger [1978]) was reiterated in Derrida (1967), p. 4 of English Ed. of 1976/1998. Simon Critchley (1999) discusses this coincidence in the section "The Problem of Closure in Derrida," noting that Heidegger does not "understand the end of philosophy as a full stop, or conclusion, to the metaphysical tradition; instead, it is necessary to think *das Ende* in terms of *die Vollendung*, as a completion, or fulfillment, of metaphysics" (Heidegger (1978), p. 374)—and that the same is the case with Derrida, to whom this end is not a perfection or finality, but a completion or closure (*clôture*) "that has left a taste in the mouth of thought" (Critchley [1999], p. 77), and which implies a deracination insofar as it involves the destruction of the essential similarity of that which is coming to an end. Contrarily to the notion of the end of philosophy in, say, Hegel, for whom his own system represented the final perfection of philosophy, Derrida suggest a thinking that "radicalizes the thinking through of metaphysics" and takes the thinking of an ending right "through to the thinking also of the end of the end. " Critchley assumes Robert Bernasconi's thesis that Derrida's *clôture* might correspond to Heidegger's *Verendung*, arguing that rather than countering Heidegger's notion of *end*, Derrida is drawing out its vast implications, for he agrees with Heidegger's essential view of the history of metaphysics (Critchley [1999], pp. 79 and 81). However, this problem is utterly beyond the aims of the present book.

At any rate, *clôture* always involves the setting of a limit. The deconstruction of logocentrism shows how the limit, or *clôture*, of a logocentric text's prevailing interpretation involves certain faults, breaks or fissures, which are the marks of an alterity, an overwhelming otherness, which the text is unable to reduce or expel, so that it cannot demarcate its inside from its outside (and is even divided within itself between belonging and not belonging to the logocentric tradition—which is where the "silence" referred to by Loy "announces a possibility..."). In space, even the *clôture* established by the phenomenological *epoche* does not really divide phenomenology from metaphysics; in time, the break announces a continuation...

[116] In Derrida (1972a), "La différance," pp. 12 and 13, we read:

"*Différance* is the nonfull, nonsimple 'origin', the structured and differing origin of differences. Therefore, the name 'origin' is no longer appropriate... Retaining at least the schema if not the content of the requirement formulated by Saussure, by *différance* we will refer to the movement according to which

language, or any code, any system of forwarding in general 'historically' constitutes itself as a tissue of differences."

To Derrida, the very movement of the *différance* is the trace *qua arche*-trace, *qua arche*-writing, which constitutes all processes of signification and articulation of language: Derrida tells us it is the becoming-space of time and the becoming-time of space (*Ibidem*, pp. 13 and 14). This is so because each and every element of language refers to another element that is not simply present, each difference refers to another difference which is not simply present, so that each element constitutes itself on the basis of traces of the other elements of the system, which are themselves traces as well: each trace refers to another trace and so there is no first or primordial trace. The difference at the "origin" of all possible differences is the trace itself *qua arche*-trace, *qua* movement of the absolute origin of meaning. Derrida wants the very concept of the trace to cause to hesitate, by "crossing it out," the concept of the origin, which he sees as being at the root of metaphysics. The *rature* (crossing out or *erasure*) implies belonging to another story, to another play: to the general text or writing that is the *arche*-writing and which submits classical concepts to the operation of the *rature*.

[117] The main hermeneutical tradition is the one that passed from Schleiermacher to Dilthey and then to Heidegger, which initially implied a clear-cut subject-object division, but which with the passing of time came to take language to be the only reality, on the basis of a view that sees language as a totality representing unity in the opposition of subject and object, and as being previous to the abstractions that language itself makes possible.

Besides, there is Nietzsche's alternative Hermeneutics, according to which "There are no facts, only interpretations." This phrase is from Nietzsche (1999), which is widely regarded as the primary source for Nietzsche's moral hermeneutics—which, rather than taking moral judgments as imperatives of reason to be evaluated, from the perspectives of radical nihilism and pessimism views them as signs to be interpreted, and the development of which Nietzsche himself (1997d) already carried out to some extent. As noted in the regular text of this section, in "On Truth and Lie in an Nonmoral Sense" (undated 1), which he wrote in 1873, Nietzsche takes this view, according to which there are no facts but only interpretations, to the realm of truth and epistemology, arguing that what is claimed to be objective truth is nothing but an endless series of metaphors, and that objective truth, the basis of scientific theories, is only an illusion. Nietzsche also makes relevant points in this regard in one 1987 work (Nietzsche [1999]) and three 1888 works (Nietzsche [1974, 1967, 1997c]).

Derrida has insinuated that hermeneutics remains attached to the old metaphysics of presence; he had in mind what I called the "main hermeneutical tradition," but in any case there is an ongoing discussion as to whether of not Derrida is right in his insinuation.

[118] *Qua* Base, *shunyata*, as understood by the *Madhyamaka-Prasangika* school of Mahayana philosophy, corresponds to the metaontological fact that no essent has true being or substance. *Qua* experience on the Path, *shunyata* is the derealization discussed in the regular text, whereas *qua* realization on the Path it might be said to involve a temporary surpassing of the delusory valuation of thought. *Qua* Fruit, *shunyata* might be said to consist in the irreversible cessation of the delusory valuation of thought.

However, the above is a Mahayana interpretation based on the Second Promulgation (*dharmachakra*) which itself does not contemplate the continuity of Base, Path and Fruit, but which I nonetheless related to these concepts. The explanation that best emphasizes this continuity is that of the Dzogchen teachings, in which *shunyata qua* Base is the ngowo (*ngo-bo*) or essence aspect of the Base; *shunyata qua* Path is the reGnition of the ngowo aspect of the Base that is the manifestation of *dharmakaya* while on the Path; and *shunyata qua* Fruit is the stabilization of the *dharmakaya* as the first of the three aspects of Buddhahood.

[119] Nonetheless, conventional truth or *samvriti satya* (Tib. kundzob denpa [*kun rdzob bden pa*]) has two subvarieties: inverted relative truth (Skt., *mithyasamvritisatya*; Tib. logpai kundzob denpa [*log pa'i kun rdzob bden pa*]), which characterizes human beings who have never realized the absolute truth, and which consists of utterly deluded perceptions, and so called "correct" relative truth (Skt., *tathyasamvritisatya*; Tib. yangdagpai kundzob denpa [*yang dag pa'i kun rdzob bden pa*]), which manifests in the post-Contemplation state of superior bodhisattvas (those who have realized the absolute truth) and which involves some awareness of the fact that this "truth" is "deluded truth" (or, which is the same, untruth), insofar as it comprises an awareness of apparitionality. (From a different perspective, the two varieties of conventional truth are: [1] ineffectual relative truth, constituted by phenomena that lack effectiveness in the sense of not being able to produce the effects that would be expected from them, as is the case with the falling hairs seen by someone with cataract, which cannot make the person bald; and [2]

actual or effective relative truth, constituted by the phenomena that are fully effective, like the falling hairs that make the person progressively bald.)

[120] The method of Thoroughly Nonabiding Madhyamikas, just as the related method that the Hwa-shan Mahayana is supposed to have defended in the alleged debate of Samye, in which he is supposed to have faced the Indian master of the lower form of the *Madhyamaka-Swatantrika-Yogachara*, Kamalashila, might have been absorbed by the Mahayana from the Semde (*sems sde*) series of Dzogchen teachings.

In the case of the method of Thoroughly Nonabiding Madhyamikas, the above could have occurred because, as stated by the traditions of the Nyingmapa (*rnying ma pa*) School of Tibetan Buddhism that were codified in the authoritative treatise *Feast for the Erudite*: *A History of the Dharma* or *Chöjung Khepai Gatön* (*chos 'byung mkhas pa'i dga' ston*) written by Pawo Tsuglag Threngwa (*dpa' bo gtsug lag phreng ba*) (1504-1566), Nagarjuna and Aryadeva were lineage holders in the transmission of Dzogchen *Atiyoga*—which has been taken to imply that the *Madhyamaka* is a philosophical explanation, adapted to the gradual Mahayana, of the essential View of Dzogchen *Ati*. In this regard, Chögyäl Namkhai Norbu has written (1988, p. 26):

"The [theoretical] viewpoint of Dzogchen is that of the *Madhyamaka-Prasangika* system (note by EC: i.e., the system of Thoroughly Nonabiding Madhyamikas), aim of the teaching of Buddha and supreme among Buddhist philosophical systems, originally expounded by Nagarjuna and his disciple Aryadeva. This is confirmed by [the root *Tantra* of the Dzogchen Menngagde series], the *Drataljur* (*sgra thal 'gyur chen po'i rgyud,* Skt., *shabda maha prasamga mula tantra*). Therefore, we could conclude that the [theoretical] view of Dzogchen [corresponds to that of] this philosophical system that transcends eternalism and nihilism. It is even possible to speculate that the [theoretical] view of *Madhyamaka-Prasangika* originated from Dzogchen. There are two reasons to substantiate this. The first is that the [real] Knowledge (of) the true condition cannot be something different from the state of spontaneous perfection of Dzogchen, and therefore the view of *Madhyamaka-Prasangika* must correspond to it. The other is that Garab Dorje, the first Master of [Buddhist] Dzogchen, was the source of two lineages, one of seven disciples and one of twenty-one, and one of these twenty-one successors was Nagarjuna. Besides, it is claimed that Aryadeva vanished in light after having received Dzogchen teachings from the second Mañjushrimitra [who is considered to have been an emanation of the direct disciple of Garab Dorje bearing the same name]. All of this is clearly reported in *A Feast for the Erudite*: *A history of Buddhism*."

The same may have occurred in the case of the Hwa-shan because, as stated in *The Sutra of Hui-neng* (Wong-Mou-Lam [trans. 1969], pp. 50-1), the most authoritative canonical source of *Ch'an* or *Zen* Buddhism, Nagarjuna and Aryadeva were respectively the fourteenth and fifteenth Patriarchs in the transmission of this school (and Western scholars have speculated that these Masters may have developed *Madhyamaka* philosophy as a theoretical basis for the practice of the sudden Mahayana). Since according to the above-mentioned text Nagarjuna and Aryadeva were Dzogchen masters, they could have introduced teachings from the Dzogchen Semde in the *Ch'an* / *Zen* tradition. And since centuries later, in Tibet, there were many interactions between Dzogchen and *Ch'an* or *Zen* (Nub Namkhai Nyingpo [*gnubs nam mkha'i snying po*] was a Master of both *Ch'an* and Dzogchen, and Aro Yeshe Jungne [*a ro ye shes 'byung gnas*] was the seventh link in both the Tibetan *Ch'an* and Dzogchen lineages), mutual influences between these traditions may have continued to take place.

The *Drataljur* and other Dzogchen texts had to emphasize the essential coincidence of the theoretical view of the *Prasangika* with that of Dzogchen because, (1) Some scholars had mistaken the Dzogchen view according to which the true nature of mind is Awake awareness, for the lower *Yogachara* view according to which there is a thoroughly established (yongdrub [*yongs grub*]) Buddha-nature, and (2) These scholars had tried to confirm the wrongly assumed identity between *Yogachara* and Dzogchen, on the basis of the fact that Third Promulgation terms used by the *Yogachara* such as *klishta mano vijñana*, *alaya vijñana* and *swasamvedana* are central to *Ati* Dzogpa Chenpo, and that the same applies to the concept of the continuity of Base, Path and Fruit featured in Maitreyanatha's *Uttaratantra* (which strictly speaking does not belong either to the *Yogachara* School or the *Madhyamaka Swatantrika Yogachara* subschools, but which the *Madhyamika* Rangtongpas and in particular the *Madhyamika* Prasangikas associate to these schools)—all of which are extraneous to the sutras of the Second Promulgation and to *Prasangika* philosophy.

Concerning the confusion of the *Ati* view according to which the true nature of mind is Awake awareness, with the lower *Yogachara* view according to which there is a thoroughly established Buddha-nature, it must be stressed that the Dzogchen teachings, rather than viewing the nature of mind as thoroughly

established, assert it to be an awareness free of elaborations (thödräl [*spros bral*); since freedom from elaborations is the main trait of *Prasangika* philosophy, and since *Ati* Dzogpa Chenpo views all phenomena as being empty of self-existence in a way that cannot be distinguished from that of the Prasangikas, in these most essential respects the "theoretical view" of Dzogchen corresponds to that of the *Prasangika* subschool (furthermore, the conception of voidness in the *Yogachara* School is much lower than that of the Uma Rangtongpa or *Swabhava Shunyata Madhyamaka* in general, and, even more so, than that of the Dzogchen teachings—and even the conception of voidness of the *Madhyamaka Swatantrika* subschools is not as thorough as both that of the *Prasangika* School and that of the Dzogchen teachings). However, *Prasangika* philosophy does not speak of a "nature of mind" or a "spontaneous awareness" (which in Dzogchen is not understood as an "awareness of consciousness" but as a nondual awareness that in *samsara* becomes awareness [of] consciousness), and thus there is a greater coincidence between Dzogchen and *Mahamadhyamaka*, which shares the *Prasangika* concept of freedom from elaborations but which accepts a "spontaneous awareness" that in *samsara* becomes awareness [of] consciousness, than there is between Dzogchen and *Prasangika* (for a thorough discussion of this, cf. the upcoming revised edition in print of Capriles [2004]).

Concerning the use in the Dzogchen teachings of terms featured in Sutras of the Third Promulgation that were assimilated by the *Yogachara* and *Madhyamaka Swatantrika Yogachara* schools, the reader must be reminded that according to the Nyingmapa the highest philosophical schools of the Mahayana are those that make up the subtle, inner *Madhyamaka* (and in particular the one known as *Mahamadhyamaka*; cf. Dudjom Rinpoche, J. Y. D., English 1991, Trans.: G. Dorje and M. Kapstein), which are also based mainly on the Sutras of the Third Promulgation, and which use the concepts and terms that these Sutras share with the Dzogchen teachings, which they interpret in a far subtler and more refined way than do the *Yogachara* and *Madhyamaka Swatantrika Yogachara* schools. However, no Mahayana school whatsoever features any of the concepts that respond to the Dzogchen principle of spontaneous liberation and its results; besides, the Dzogchen teachings present a much ampler and more coherent system that gives some of the terms it shares with the subtle, inner *Madhyamaka* a meaning that is quite different from the one they have in all Mahayana systems (all of which has been used to support the thesis according to which those terms and concepts existed in the Dzogchen teachings before they were incorporated into the Mahayana). To conclude, the continuity Base-Path-Fruit is far more perfect in the Dzogchen teachings than in the *Uttaratantra*, which may be have arisen from adapting the continuity of Dzogchen and the less perfect continuity of the Tantras of the Path of Transformation (in both of which the Buddha-nature is fully actual) to the lower views of the Mahayana (also for a thorough discussion of this cf. the upcoming revised edition in print of Capriles [2004]).

[121] Nonaffirming negation or absolute negation (Skt., *prasajyapratisedha*: Tib. megag [*med dgag*]) is a negation which negates the object of negation without implying anything else; in the Gelugpa tradition this type of negation is illustrated with the statement "A Brahmin should not drink alcohol" (I am not sure this example is the proper one—i.e., the one that illustrated the meaning the term had before Tsongkhapa reformed the Prasangika view and practice, and which really makes sense; I am of the impression that the correct example should be something like "there is no man whatsoever"). Affirming negation or implicative negation (Skt., *paryudasapratisedha*; Tib. mayingag [*ma yin dgag*]) is a negation that upon negating its object of negation implies the assertion of some other facts; this type of negation is generally illustrated with the statement "this man is not a Brahmin."

The original sense of nonaffirming negation or absolute negation it properly illustrated by Nagarjuna's *chatushkoti* or negation of the four extreme views, for the negation of all conceptual possibilities concerning an essent does not allow for the assertion of anything whatsoever; it is to be assumed that this was the sense the term nonaffirming negation or absolute negation had among the original Prasangikas, who, as we have seen, were the ones called "Thoroughly Nonabiding Madhyamikas" (Skt., *sarvadharmapratisthanavadin*; Tib., rabtu minepar mawa [*rab tu mi gnas par smra ba*]). Je Tsongkhapa was totally right in viewing the voidness arrived at by the Shantarakshita-Kamalashila-Arya Vimuktasena form of *Madhyamaka-Swatantrika-Yogachara* as an affirming or implicative negation insofar as the voidness this system seeks is the presence of the object being analyzed as an existent though illusion-like phenomenon (which is claimed to be concordant with the actual ultimate truth and a non-metaphoric ultimate insofar as it involves the negation of true existence)—which is one of the reasons why these authors have been called reason-established illusionists [Skt., *mayopamadvayavadin*; Tib., gyuma rigdrubpa mawa [*sgyu ma rigs grub pa smra ba*]).

Though Je Tsongkhapa taught the method of insight meditation of the Shantarakshita-Kamalashila-Arya Vimuktasena form of *Madhyamaka-Swatantrika-Yogachara* (which he adapted from the there *Bhavanakramas* by Shantarakshita and the three *Bhavanakramas* by Kamalashila), rather than that of the Prasangikas, he claimed that insofar as in his adaptation of the method in question the voidness sought is the presence of the absence of the inherent existence that is like a hare's horn in that it does not exist at all (rather than the realization of the object of analysis as an existent though illusion-like phenomenon), the voidness that manifests at the term of the analysis is a nonaffirming or absolute negation. However, whereas in the *chatushkoti* or negation of the four extreme views one cannot affirm the existence, the nonexistence, "both one and the other," or "neither one not the other," in this case the nonexistence is affirmed and posited as the ultimate truth. This shows that the nature of the Fruit depends on that of the Path, and that of the Path on that of the Fruit, for in Tsongkhapa's method one arrives at a result one can grasp at (the conceptual nonexistence of an essent), rather than arriving at the impossibility of grasping at anything—which is what may result in the manifestation of the genuine absolute truth.

For a more complete and precise explanation of this, cf. the upcoming edition in print of Capriles (2004).

[122] I copy from Coward (1990), note 30 to Chapter Six, "Derrida and Nagarjuna," pp. 185-6:

"This is nicely exemplified in the analysis of the statement 'the human soul is eternal' offered by Nagarjuna and Chandrakirti. Chandrakirti asks what is the relationship between the subject, 'the human soul', and the predication, 'is eternal'; are the two terms identical or different? 'If the two terms are identical, we are left with a tautology: the eternal human soul is eternal. If they are different and distinct, what could possibly justify the claim that they are related'. ('Prolegomenon to Vallabha's Theology of Revelation', p. 109). See 'Self and the Way Things Really Are', in Sprung, Mervin, 1979, pp. 165-186."

[123] I have in mind those Derrida-influenced thinkers who promote so-called "political correctness"—with regard to which Baudrillard (1996b, p. 139) rightly noted that the it and the euphemisms it fosters constitute a preaching "far more obscene than that which it tries to hide" (even though I am really at odds with the idea of "obscene," and though I find a great deal of the works the French author wrote after 1990 to be extremely shallow, inconsequential and frivolous, I quite agree with Baudrillard in this regard).

A most renowned specimen of this class is literature professor Stanley Fish, from Duke University, who argued that since all speech is a political power play, ideas must be monitored and managed, rather than rationally and constructively engaged (Fish [1992])—an attitude that has lead a liberal academic like Harvard University's Alan Dershowitz to claim that a new McCarthyism pervades intellectual life today (Dershowitz [1992]). The other side of the coin is the "anything goes and must be respected" premise of such thinkers, which under the guise of carrying tolerance and democracy to hitherto unknown degrees, in real practice makes it acceptable for people to embrace and promote fascism and intolerance. Consider the following paragraphs in the review of Mohanty (1997), in Wallia (undated):

"...Because a given word can have different meanings, any text can be read in various ways ... to take apart or deconstruct texts is to reveal their hidden meanings, values or ideologies. And what one finds are 'binary opposites' such as male or female or truth and fiction, with one term getting a 'privileged' position while the other is pushed to the 'margins'. An example might be the convention of using 'he' rather than 'she'... when referring to men or women." (Quoted from Smith, Dinita, 'Philosopher Gamely Defends His Ideas', in the New York Times, 30 May 1998.)...

"Deconstruction's focus on the hidden hierarchies in language appealed immediately to the predilections of the burgeoning academic disciplines of feminist, ethnic, and postcolonial studies. The growth of those disciplines in the past two decades has made deconstruction fashionable in American universities.

"However, critics of Derrida charge deconstruction with destabilizing and neutralizing political and moral values. Such nihilistic amoralism, they say, had made it possible for Martin Heidegger to join Nazism. Since Derrida had been heavily influenced by Heidegger's work, he was asked to answer for Heidegger's amoralistic behavior. Moreover, in 1987 it was found out that Derrida's close associate, Paul de Mann, a Yale professor, had written anti-Semitic newspaper articles during the Nazi occupation of Belgium...

"In the first four essays, Mohanty evaluates the work of cultural theorists like Jacques Derrida, Paul de Mann, Gayatri Spivak, Hilary Putnam, Louis Althusser, and Frederic Jameson. And in the [three essays of the] book's second part... he constructs a sustained argument for 'moral universalism and multiculturalism [as] compatible and indeed complementary ideals... Multiculturalism should be defined as a form of epistemic cooperation across cultures'.

"...In the fourth essay, 'Jameson's Marxist Hermeneutics and the Need for an Adequate Epistemology', Mohanty evaluates Frederic Jameson's synthesis of key poststructuralist insights with Marxist

hermeneutics as well as his defense of interpretation as 'exemplary for contemporary criticism'... Mohanty faults Jameson (as well as Althusser) for adhering to [the] poststructuralists' limited epistemology of linguistic reference and knowledge... In a footnote, Mohanty observes: 'In my opinion, if we were to attempt a sociological explanation of postmodernist epistemology, it would deal less with 'late capitalism' and more with the power of the Western academy over intellectual discourse, with its power—through its structure of recognition and rewards—to discourage critical examination of one of its most fashionable theories ... it would make clear to what extent postmodernist theory ... is a creation of the marketplace, rather than a genuine intellectual development'...

"In the fifth essay, 'Political Criticism and the Challenge of Otherness', Mohanty derides the cultural and historical relativism rampant in postmodernist discourse as a concomitant of its principle of the indeterminate nature of textual meanings. Cultural relativism is 'inadequate for cross-cultural understanding ... and intellectually underjustified as well as politically misguided'."

The fact that I quote the above does not mean I endorse Mohanty's view (or that of the reviewer, for that matter). And the same applies—just even more so—to the following excerpt from Sokal & Bricmont (1999), pp. 111-112 (I am retranslating into English from the Spanish):

"Unfortunately, postmodern ideas are not confined to European Departments of Philosophy or North-American Departments of Literature. It seems to us that where they do most harm is the Third World, precisely there where the immense majority of the world population lives and where the supposedly 'surpassed' work of the Enlightenment is far from being concluded."

The authors take for granted that all peoples of the world should go through the European Enlightenment, which implies that they take for granted the cultural superiority of European civilization over all other world cultures. Fortunately, many Europeans and North Americans have set out to practice Eastern mystical systems that may provide an antidote to the arrogance and hubris that led the Enlightenment to produce the current ecological crisis. They continue:

"Meera Nanda, an Indian biochemist who has been engaged in the movements of 'science for the people' in India and who currently studies sociology of science in the United States, tells the following story *à propos* of the traditional Vedic superstitions that regulate the construction of sacred buildings and which are meant to boost 'positive energy' to the maximum. An Indian politician who was stuck in great difficulties was warned... 'that his difficulties would disappear if he came into his office through a door oriented to the East. However, that access was blocked by a slum and it was impossible to go through it by car. Hence he ordered the demolition of the slum'.

"Much to the point, Nanda points out the following:

"'If the Indian left had kept so active in the movements of science for the people as it had been in the past, it would have entered into a debate, not only against the demolition of the houses, but against the superstition that had been used to justify it. (,,,) A left that would not have been so careful of guaranteeing 'respect' for non-Western knowledge would have never allowed those who detent power [to hide] behind the indigenous 'experts'.'

"'I told this story to my friends adhering to social constructivism in the United States. (...) [They told me] that to put in the same bag two descriptions of space so different from each other [as that of the scientific vision and that of Vedic traditions], which are both linked to different cultures, is in itself a progressive action, for then *neither* can aspire at absolute truth, and therefore tradition will end up losing its present control over the mentality of people (Nanda, 1997, p. 82).

"The problem with this kind of answers is that practical choices must be made: what medicine must be used or in what sense is it convenient to orient buildings? In these cases theoretical laxity becomes unsustainable. The result is that intellectuals fall into the hypocrisy of employing 'Western' science when it is indispensable (for example, when they are gravely ill), while recommending the people to trust superstitions."

Are the Vedic rules for building, as the above authors take for granted, mere superstitions? I certainly do not know and the point is irrelevant with regard to the problem under consideration, which is that the welfare of a single politician is seen as justifying the destruction of the homes of many common people and the subjection of these to all the sufferings and hardships that derive from this. However, it is evident that, in spite of all the ills produced by Western medicine (and by stating this I am not denying its achievements, and in particular the fact that nowadays it provides treatments which often are the only ones leading to remission in hitherto uncommon disorders that now proliferate due to the heavy pollution all kinds of technology has produced in our time) and of the mortal ecological crisis that has reduced to absurdity

science and technology as they have developed so far in the West, and in spite of the fact that in our time the healing power and relative innocuousness of ancient Eastern medical systems, and the power of Eastern spiritual systems, have been widely substantiated by modern scientific research, the authors in question see modern Western allopathic medicine as the only and true science of healing, while rejecting all forms of Ayurveda (and by extension of Chinese and Tibetan medicine) as mere superstitions—betraying a scientism that labels whatever has to do with ancient tradition as superstition and whatever has to do with modern science as truth. (As way of example of the healing power of a traditional Asian medical system, research by C. W. Ottaway, David Taylor, Philip Rogers, Richard Glassberg and Chinese veterinarians such as San Hyuck Shin, Wei Gao, Yi Xin Huang, Hong Chen, Da Yong Song & Qin Li Wang, etc. has shown acupuncture can cure infectious illnesses in animals—which cannot be due to a placebo effect insofar as animals are not liable to self-suggestion [cf. among other works: Rogers, White & Ottaway, 1977; Rogers, Philip & Bossy, 1981; Rogers, 1988, updated 1990, 1993; Rogers, 1991, 1993, 1996; Gao, Huang, Chen, Song & Wang, 2000]. Likewise, research by specialists has confirmed the outstanding physiological effects of physical yoga and meditation techniques [Stein, 2003]; as a token, the team headed by Herbert Benson, MD, of Harvard University, has proven that an outstandingly rapid increase in body temperature is achieved through the yogic practice of tummo [*gtum mo*] [Benson, Lehmann, Malhotra, Goldman, Hopkins & Epstein, 1982].) Furthermore, modern allopathic Western medicine is currently looting the Asian, American, African and Oceanian storehouses of medical knowledge in order to patent their findings. Before a plant employed by one of these indigenous systems has been patented, Sokal and Bricmont would have to regard its healing power as a mere superstition; however, as soon as it has been patented, they would have to view it as certain scientific knowledge. However, as just noted and as repeated again and again throughout this chapter, modern science-based technology has produced the ecological crisis that threatens to put an end to all life on this planet; therefore, if, as suggested in Descola (1996), the interventions of Amazonian aborigines in the natural environment improved biodiversity... then down with science and long live superstition!!!

Of course, not all supposed "superstitions" are good and not all science is evil—and yet there is no doubt Catherine Walsh is right when she writes (2004; the translation of the excerpt is my own):

"However, perhaps the greatest consequence of the geopolitics of knowledge is that it allows us to understand that knowledge works like the economy: it is organized in terms of centers of power and subordinate regions—the centers of financial capital being the centers of intellectual capital as well. This is why the intellectual production of Latin America, and even more so that of Ecuador, still bears such a little weight in the world. But there is an additional problem: the discourse of modernity created the illusion that knowledge is abstract, unlocated and delocalized, causing us to think that knowledge is something universal, having neither home nor body, neither gender nor color of skin. It is also this discourse of modernity that creates the need, for all regions of the planet, to "ascend" to the epistemology of modernity; that is, to approach, from Latin America, the Eurocentric model as the only valid one concerning progress in the field of knowledge. The author Jean Franco uses the metaphor of the body in order to explain this colonial, imperial relation—the thinking head in the North, whereas the acting body (which also carries out the biological body functions) is in the South.

"Therefore, to speak of the geopolitics of knowledge is to acknowledge the hegemonic nature of the [re]production, the diffusion and the use of knowledge, not simply as an academic exercise, but as a fundamental aspect of the capitalist, modern world-system, which simultaneously is still colonial."

The absolute relativism and the nihilism of trends of "postmodern" constructivism is not to be contested with the bigotry of the scientism and Eurocentrism that—despite the fact that the Enlightenment and Western science have led our species to the verge of extinction, and that only the ancient wisdom they despise can save us from extinction—sees the whole of ancient Eastern wisdom as superstition and places the Enlightenment and Western science on the throne of Truth. On the contrary, in each particular case we must determine which approach is most appropriate and less harmful for both human beings and the whole of the biosphere: that of modern Western science, or that of traditional approaches—for, once more, it is a matter of adopting the narrative or the story that does most good and produces least evil.

[124] There is no doubt that globalization is undermining attachment to the traditional views of all human societies, which in its turn favors revolt against the established order in the societies undergoing this transformation—which in its turn is necessary if the wayward order at the root of human suffering and ecological crisis is to be surpassed. Besides, globalization is making it evident that the richest part of the global population is squeezing to the extreme the poorest part of the same population in order to maintain

its privileges in a world of rapidly depleting resources and increasing pollution and ecological destruction—which may also elicit revolt in those who are oppressed and exploited. Finally, globalization is exacerbating the process of *reductio ad absurdum* of delusion by impelling ecological destruction. Therefore, in a way globalization is propelling the death of that which must die for humankind not to die, and therefore is leading to the advent of the New Age of Communion, homeostasis, socioeconomic and political equality, and plenitude in frugality, which according to the present metanarrative, will constitute the true postmodernity.

However, the above does not amount to endorsing the view Marx expressed in the articles he published in the *New York Tribune* in 1853, in which he interpreted a massacre committed by the British in India as an important episode in the modernization of humankind. Nor is it exactly the same as the charge against nationalism—both that of oppressors and that of the oppressed—from a supposedly "postmodern" standpoint, in Hardt & Negri (2001), where the authors write that, "In the nineteenth century Karl Marx (...) acknowledged the utopic potential of the ever increasing processes of global interaction and communication" (p. 118). It is significant that this view implies that the authors are understanding history in terms of a metanarrative they do not acknowledge to be such, and hence Lyotard and most "postmodern" thinkers would not view their work as strictly fulfilling the conditions for being "postmodern."

(In Hardt & Negri [2004], the American literary theorist from Duke University, and the philosopher who founded the Italian Radical Party and who upon being accused of belonging to the Italian Red Brigades exiled himself in France until his extradition to Italy toward the end of the decade of the 1990s, further develop the ideological line of *Empire*, asserting that in our time for the first time the possibility of democracy on a global scale is emerging (one in which NGOs would have more relevance than State structures), for the basic project of the multitude expresses the wish for a world of equality and freedom, and the demand for an inclusive global democratic society, while at the same time providing the means to achieve it. I think it may be a sign of the times that Toni Negri eulogizes the ever increasing processes of global interaction and communication that are eroding non-Western cultures, and yet his son has taken the opposite stand by heading an Italian organization that promotes respect toward the Tibetan culture and offers help to Tibet.)

[125] Obviously, I do not mean that the whole of the sense data and potential sense data that may be singled out within the universe manifests in one's awareness at once; what I mean is that the whole is an unthinkable, inconceivable nature which can only be realized directly beyond conceptual, dualistic knowledge, and that this nature is realized when, in the condition of *aletheia*, the all-embracing primordial gnosis becomes patent—independently of how extremely little of the universe may be embraced by an individual's continuum of sensa.

[126] If the whole of the universe is in truth the absolute, what is it that speaks when people speak, but the absolute? Of course, from the standpoint of the absolute, what we call speech is not speech, and hence from this standpoint the absolute may not be said to speak. However, when a *muni sadhu* commits himself to not speaking, he is doing so in the relative sense in which there is speech when words come from his mouth and silence when words do not come out from it, and he is imitating his wrong conception of the absolute, which he believes does not speak in this relative sense. In order to dispel this error, a *Madhyamika* philosopher would probably tell the *muni sadhu* that the absolute neither speaks—insofar as from the standpoint of the absolute speech has no existence—nor remains silent—to begin with, because from the standpoint of the absolute also silence has no existence, but perhaps also because all that happens in the relative is in fact the absolute and hence when people speak what is speaking is the absolute. It is for the last reason that, from a relative perspective, I related the relative to the absolute and said speech and all that manifests in the universe is the play of the absolute. (Relating the absolute and the relative does not involve the error Kant perceived in Leibniz, and which I explained as the mixture of two different logical types, for in this case we are not dealing with two different spheres of reality that can have no contact with each other, but with two different perspectives on reality, which manifest coincidently in the *dharmadhatu* of *li-shih-wu-ai* of the *Avatamsaka Sutra* and the Hwa-yen school of Chinese Buddhism; since from the standpoint of the relative there is speech, from the standpoint of the *dharmadhatu* of *li-shih-wu-ai*, it may be said that the absolute has speech.)

[127] There is an ongoing dispute concerning whether or not the Nagarjuna who was a disciple of the *Mahasiddha* Sarahapada and the Nagarjuna who originated the *Madhyamaka* school are the same person, for the former has been dated about the eighth century CE, and the latter is generally viewed as being

much earlier (for an account of the various views with regard to Nagarjuna's dating, including those by Western scholars as well, see Ruegg [1981], pp. 46). However, there is no doubt that the Nagarjuna who originated the *Madhyamaka* school is the one that, according to the *Feast for the Erudite*: *A History of the Dharma* or *Chöjung Khepai Gatön* (*chos 'byung mkhas pa'i dga' ston*) written by Pawo Tsuglag Threngwa (*dpa' bo gtsug lag phreng ba*) (1504-1566), was a Dzogchen master, and that the same applies to the Aryadeva who was a disciple of Nagarjuna, for the text refers to a rather early stage in the transmission of the Dzogchen teachings, which may correspond to various of the datings of the original Nagarjuna.

[128] He expresses this by saying that the needed *clôture* is in Nagarjuna; however, I doubt what is lacking in Derrida, which may be provided by Nagarjuna, may be properly referred to by the Derridian term *clôture*. The reasons for this are patent in the discussion of the Derridian *clôture* in a previous note in which Critchley (1999), section "The Problem of Closure in Derrida," is quoted.

[129] However, the Buddhist vehicles of the Path of Renunciation maintain the sexist vices introduced by the Indo-Europeans, which had not developed as yet in the pre-Indo-European religions of India and the Himalayas. These vices were eradicated only in the various forms of Tantrism (Buddhist, Shaiva and Jaina) and in the Dzogchen teachings (in their Buddhist and possibly Shaiva forms), which in the Christian era restored in India the egalitarian character of original Indian and Himalayan religions. (I am assuming that the vices in question did not develop in Tibet before the introduction of Buddhism, and hence I am not referring to the Bönpo Tantric and Dzogchen teachings as carrying out the same restoration.)

[130] The reader may ask him or her self what is the use of the Buddhist methods intended for achieving the spontaneous dissolution of the mental subject, since the latter dissolves anyhow at the end of the cognition in which it manifested interdependently with its object. The point is that the dissolution of the mental subject that occurs after each and every cognition does *not* involve either the realization that the mental subject is an illusion, or the reGnition (of) the true condition of reality in an event of *nirvana*, and is immediately followed by the condition of the base-of-all in which neither *samsara* nor *nirvana* are active—the manifestation of which is indispensable for maintaining the continuity of *samsara*. In order to advance on the Path to the transcendence of *samsara* in the manifestation of *nirvana* we must apply the methods that make it possible for the mental subject to spontaneously dissolve *in the reGnition* (*of*) *the Self*-qua-*Base*, right during the manifestation of a cognition rather than after a cognition has passed, and making it evident that the mental subject is an illusion and that the true condition of reality does not involve the subject-object duality.

[131] In his *Dialogues* Plato posited two eternal principles, among others: (1) the *eidos*, which were pure Forms having no matter whatsoever, had a fullness of being, truth, goodness, beauty and so on; and (2) matter, which was formless, had absolutely no being, truth, goodness, beauty and so on. Using the *eidos* as models, the Demiurge molded formless matter (and, in the case of human beings, inserted in their bodies the respective souls—some of which had witnessed the *eidos* before being in the human body, and therefore had the potentiality of remembering the true reality consisting in the *eidos*, and hence of becoming philosophers), giving rise to the transient physical world—which, insofar as it had form, had some of the being, truth, goodness, beauty and so on inherent in the *eidos* or Forms. This is why we may *not* say the physical world of mere appearances had *absolutely no value* to Plato: it had some value insofar as it had form. (Plato's *Dialogues* express myths that seem intended for childish people, and which supposedly represent his exoteric doctrines, as different from the esoteric doctrines that were called *agrapha dogmata* or "unwritten doctrines.")

[132] In his dialogues, Plato attributed to Socrates his own metaphysical views; since the mainstream Western metaphysical tradition is Platonic, this tradition assumed Socrates was as Plato described him. However, the Cynics, the different Megarian streams of thought, and the Cyrenaics, had their own picture of Socrates; though not all of these pictures survived until our time, we have the one drawn by the Cynics, which is the one that most aptly explains the reasons why Socrates was forced to drink the **cicuta**. In this regard, despite their anti-metaphysical stances, Nietzsche and Vattimo follow the mainstream Western metaphysical tradition and believe the Socrates of Plato's *Dialogues* to be the true one.

[133] It would be wrong to think that in themselves nihilism and the dead of god pleased Nietzsche. He did not welcome the advent of nihilism *per se* because he foresaw that as a consequence of the 'Death of God' what we regard as human civilization and culture, all that we hold as most worthy and valuable and that

is the source of our self-esteem, was likely to be overtaken and destroyed by a more brutal and animal-like age. He expressed his fears as follows (Nietzsche, Friedrich, English 1983, II, section 9):

"[If] ... the lack of any cardinal distinction between man and animal—doctrines which I consider true but deadly—are thrust upon the people for another generation ... no one should be surprised if the people perishes of petty egoism, ossification and greed, falls apart and ceases to be a people; in its place systems of individualist egoism, brotherhoods for rapacious exploitation of non-brothers ... may perhaps appear in the arena of the future."

[134] Nietzsche (1873; this English Ed. undated) concludes in this regard:

"What then is truth? A movable host of metaphors, metonymies, and anthropomorphisms: in short, a sum of human relations which have been poetically and rhetorically intensified, transferred, and embellished, and which, after long usage, seem to a people to be fixed, canonical, and binding. Truths are illusions which we have forgotten are illusions—they are metaphors that have become worn out and have been drained of sensuous force, coins which have lost their embossing and are now considered as metal and no longer as coins."

[135] This leitmotif runs though Nietzsche's works; in *Thus Spoke Zarathushtra*, he attributes this contempt to the "prophet" who reformed the Indo-European Persian religion, but who in Nietzsche's work is a personification of the author having hardly anything to do with the original character. For example, *Zarathushtra* 28 ("The Rabble") begins:

"LIFE is a well of delight; but where the rabble also drink, there all fountains are poisoned."

(Nietzsche, Friedrich, Nietzsche, Friedrich, 1891, adaptation by Paul Douglas of the Thomas Common trans., this English ed. undated.)

[136] Below in the regular text the way in which Vattimo structures his own so-called "postmodern" theory in terms of his two readings of Nietzsche is explained. With regard to Heidegger, his position is related to an interpretation of the latter's view of the crisis of humanism. Heidegger views the disposition of our technological world (*Ge-Stell*) as the most advanced version and logical conclusion of Western metaphysics, for rationalism always *implied* the ideal of achieving rational domination over a world of objects, which is the project of technology. This is why the defense by humanism of values such as freedom, truth or reason cannot convince us that these values may represent an alternative in face of technological values: they share the same metaphysical base and characteristics; *both* humanism *and* technology *are* metaphysics. Hence the present crisis is not due to the fact that technology threatens the values of humanism; on the contrary, it is due to the fact that technology has made patent the result to which these values inevitably lead.

[137] Baudrillard agrees that Vattimo is wrong in believing that thought has the capacity of making of the world a fiction for us—and hence in viewing this as a philosophical task. However, this is not due to a realization by Baudrillard that unassisted thought cannot carry out this transformation, and that in order to carry it out we must resort to traditional means of the Paths of Awakening, which must allow us to go beyond the delusory valuation of thought in the state of Communion, and manipulate our delusorily valued thoughts in the state of post-Communion. Baudrillard's critique lies in the fact that he sees the project enunciated by Vattimo as being too centered on the subject, and as involving a gross underestimation of the world, fictitious or not, that we try to represent or capture objectively. However, Baudrillard's objections and theses in this regard seem even more pedestrian than those of Vattimo's—and so if he is right in claiming that the *pensiero debole* (weak thought) is truly a way of thinking proper of a feeble mind (Baudrillard [1996a], p. 36), then his own thought must come from an even feebler mind. What is the point of noting that even computers have viruses?! (Vattimo's *pensiero debole* is the means that author proposes in order to achieve the "fabulation of the world." It is supposed to be proper of a consciousness that has freed itself from the belief in metaphysical, technological or humanistic realities, and which undermines the efforts of technological civilization to impose its own version of the world as the only possible reality, which at once weakens the pretensions of effectiveness of technological reality and rejects the nostalgia for the humanistic pretense of placing the human subject at the center, controlling and ordering the world of objects: it attempts to experience science and technology as contaminated by other languages of contemporary culture, showing that the world may be made to become "lighter" if we just realize that there is no clear-cut division into truth, on the one hand, and fiction, information and images, on the other (Vattimo [1988], p. 29). (It may be interesting to note that, in Baudrillard's view, there may be no need to fable history, for history as we understand it is a simulation insofar as it presents itself as a model of time resting on the concept of an end, which at the

same time it keeps in suspense, and insofar as it can only take place in this sort of simulated time. He notes that each and everyone is conscious of the arbitrariness, of the artificial character of time and history (1994a, p. 8.)

[138] Cf. note 50 to this chapter.

[139] Cf. note 50 to this chapter.

[140] Teleonomy demonstrates that the human system, with its programs and metaprograms, is oriented toward Awakening: this is evidenced by the dynamics of the relations between primary process and secondary process—and in particular by the *Thanatos* which, as understood by Gregory Bateson (1972), is an inherent element of this dynamics. Bateson interpreted this teleonomy in terms of the concept of teleology; though this is legitimate, postmodern thinkers reject teleology as such, which they see as belonging to the old metaphysics that has supposedly been surpassed. (The true logical error would lie in positing a final cause [*to telos, to ou enecha*] as an efficient cause [*earche tos metaboles*].)

[141] Cf. note 50 to this chapter.

[142] The Mahayana holds that good an evil depend on intention, and intention is generally held to depend on consciousness. Besides, according to the *Yogachara* or *Chittamatra* School of Mahayana philosophy, the maturation of good and bad karmas depends on the continuity of consciousness. This is why in *Bodhicharyavatara* 9: 11 the Madhyamika master Shantideva offered us the following dialogue (1996, p. 116):

"[Proponent of the *Chittamatra* view] If consciousness does not exist, then there is no evil in, for example, murdering an illusory man.

"[Proponent of the *Madhyamika* view:] On the contrary, [even though there is no consciousness], insofar as one is endowed with the illusion of consciousness, [depending on intentions] good and evil arise."

[143] As noted in the regular text, according to Vattimo, the increased awareness of a plurality of views of history that is partly due to the media explosion, puts an end to our capacity to view history as unilinear—which in his view represents the end of history inherent in the notion of postmodernity. Parallel to this, the radicalization of nihilism makes it impossible to believe anything to be absolutely true—which leads to the famous "fabulation of the world" that he propounds. Baudrillard, for his part, asserts that technology absorbs the illusion and vision of the world, turning it into tele-reality, in "real time" and in vitality which, according to him, is the antithesis of illusion: it is total disillusion and disappearance. This is so because the technology of the media, through its vicious process, exhausts our faith in reality and at the same time teaches us to question each and every image and commentary, giving rise to indifference, distance, skepticism and apathy. However, the thesis that the technology of the media teaches us to question each and every image and commentary does not seem to be correct, for recent research in France has shown that watching TV tends to inhibit the functioning of the cerebral cortex, making it difficult for us to take a distance with regard to whatever is broadcasted and criticize it. What media such as TV actually do is to generate apathy in face of all the horrors the news and other programs show; this may seem to sustain views such as Vattimo, for apathy before events may seem similar to what one is supposed to experience before an illusion that one knows to be an illusion. However, it is not at all the same, for the experience of the superior bodhisattva in the post-Contemplation state, rather than being pervaded by apathy, is pervaded by compassion.

[144] In Eliade (1959), we read:

"If we observe the general behavior of archaic man, we are struck by the following fact: neither the objects of the external world nor human acts, properly speaking, have any autonomous intrinsic value. Objects or acts acquire a value, and in so doing become real, because they participate, after one fashion or another, in a reality that transcends them...

"Nutrition is not a simple physiological operation; it renews a communion. Marriage and the collective orgy echo mythical prototypes; they are repeated because they were consecrated in the beginning ('in those days', in *illo tempore*) by gods, ancestors, or heroes.

"In the particulars of his conscious behavior, the 'primitive', the archaic man, acknowledges no act which has not been previously posited and lived by someone else... What he does has been done before. His life is the ceaseless repetition of gestures initiated by others... [His] gesture acquires meaning, reality, solely to the extent to which it repeats a primordial act."

[145] Cf. note 53 to this chapter.

[146] Nietzsche—who referred to the divorce of human beings from nature as "human degeneration"—seems to have intuited that history developed as a process of *reductio ad absurdum*, for he asserted nihilism to be

developing toward an extreme (i.e., a threshold) at which it could be overcome, and insisted that "man" (i.e., the human) was "something that must be overcome." Though this idea of Nietzsche is of utmost importance in our time, when the "human" cycle of evolution is about to come to an end and our survival depends on the transition to the following cycle, and though part of Nietzsche's characterization of the superhuman—which I prefer to call the posthuman, which does not give the idea of an improvement, of something better than the condition that preceded it—seems quite admissible, admission of other aspects of this characterization would be extremely dangerous.

For example, the characterization of this evolutional stage in terms of "will for power" (*Wille zur Macht*) could be interpreted as meaning that in it the impulse to dominate nature and other human beings should continue to prevail. Likewise, the idea that beings in the stage in question will oppose the "feminine values of Christianity," such as compassion, love and so on, is totally inverted, for the posthuman would embody what these values represent—which implies, however, that they will no longer be values as such (cf. Capriles [1993, 1994], as well as the second chapter of Capriles [1994a]). Furthermore, for the posthuman no traits would be exclusively "feminine" or "masculine," for males would reintegrate their femininity, no longer projecting it outside themselves, and females would reintegrate their masculinity, no longer projecting it outside themselves.

As suggested by both the title and the contents of Francis Bacon's 1603 work *The Masculine Birth of Time, Or the Great Instauration of the Dominion of Man over the Universe*, in which he wrote: "I am come in very truth leading Nature to you, with all her children, to bind her to your service and to make her your slave... So may I succeed in my only earthly wish, namely to stretch the deplorably narrow limits of man's dominion over the universe to their promised bounds," and as reiterated again and again by ecofeminism, in Chinese terms the scientific-technological project that has led us to the verge of self-destruction may be said to be an extremely yang project aiming at the domination of nature, which has generally been seen as female. However, this project and that which gave rise to it will not be surpassed by ying values and female power coming to prevail; it will only be surpassed when *yin* and *yang*, female and male, be integrated in the holistic *tao* vision (i.e., in the condition of *aletheia*, Communion, the Self-*qua*-Path or however we call it) that embraces and harmonizes the opposites.

Since Nietzsche was such a rabid elitist, since he eulogized the German, and since Hitler praised him, some identify with Nazism the thesis of a transition from the human to the posthuman. However, both biological evolutionism and human teleonomy seems to imply that, just as the human arose out of the prehuman, it would have to give rise to the posthuman, which would replace it. In the words of the XIIIth century Persian sage Jalal-ud-din Rumi (retranslated into English from Rumi [1983]):

"I died as mineral and lived as vegetable;
having died as vegetable, I became animal;
coming out from the animal, l became a human being...
tomorrow I will be an angel, and then I will rise above the angels.
What you cannot imagine, that I will be.."

Except for the strident tone characteristic of Nietzsche and his pathological contempt for common human beings of his age, what the German philologist and philosopher wrote in the following passage—in which he implied that the contamination inherent in our present condition must be cleansed by madness—is not essentially different from the above (adapted by this author from Nietzsche, Friedrich, 1891, adaptation by Paul Douglas of the Thomas Common trans., this English ed. undated, *Zarathushtr*a Prologue 3-4):

"I bring you the Superman! Mankind is something to be surpassed. What have you done to surpass mankind?

"All beings so far have created something beyond themselves. Do you want to be the ebb of that great tide, and revert back to the beast rather than surpass mankind? What is the ape to a man? A laughing stock, a thing of shame. And just so shall a man be to the Superman: a laughing stock, a thing of shame. You have evolved from worm to man, but much within you is still worm. Once you were apes, yet even now man is more of an ape than any of the apes.

"Even the wisest among you is only a confusion and hybrid of plant and phantom. But do I ask you to become phantoms or plants?

"Behold, I bring you the Superman! The Superman is the meaning of the earth. Let your will say: The Superman shall be the meaning of the earth! I beg of you my brothers, remain true to the earth, and believe not those who speak to you of otherworldly hopes! Poisoners are they, whether they know it or

not. Despisers of life are they, decaying ones and poisoned ones themselves, of whom the earth is weary: so away with them!

"Once blasphemy against God was the greatest blasphemy; but God died, and those blasphemers died along with him. Now to blaspheme against the earth and to rank love for the [fictitious otherworldly reality] higher than the meaning of the earth, is the greatest sin!

"Once the soul looked contemptuously upon the body, and then that contempt was the supreme thing: the soul wished the body lean, monstrous, and famished. Thus it thought to escape from the body and the earth. But that soul was itself lean, monstrous, and famished; and cruelty was the delight of this soul! So my brothers, tell me: What does your body say about your soul? Is not your soul poverty and filth and miserable self-complacency?

"In truth, man is a polluted river. One must be a sea to receive a polluted river without becoming defiled. I bring you the Superman! He is that sea; in him your great contempt can be submerged.

"What is the greatest thing you can experience? It is the hour of your greatest contempt. The hour in which even your happiness becomes loathsome to you, and so also your reason and virtue.

"The hour when you say: 'What good is my happiness? It is poverty and filth and miserable self-complacency. But my happiness should justify existence itself'

"The hour when you say: 'What good is my reason? Does it long for knowledge as the lion for his prey? It is poverty and filth and miserable self-complacency!'

"The hour when you say: 'What good is my virtue? It has not yet driven me mad! How weary I am of my good and my evil! It is all poverty and filth and miserable self-complacency!'

"The hour when you say: 'What good is my justice? I do not see that I am filled with fire and burning coals. But the just are filled with fire and burning coals!'

"The hour when you say: 'What good is my pity? Is not pity the cross on which he is nailed who loves man? But my pity is no crucifixion!'

"Have you ever spoken like this? Have you ever cried like this? Ah! If only I had heard you cry this way! "It is not your sin — it is your moderation that cries to heaven; your very sparingness in sin cries to heaven!

"Where is the lightning to lick you with its tongue? Where is the madness with which you should be cleansed?

"Behold, I bring you the Superman! He is that lightning; he is that madness!...

"Man is a rope stretched between the animal and the Superman—a rope over an abyss.

"A dangerous crossing, a dangerous wayfaring, a dangerous looking-back, a dangerous trembling and halting."

Thus it is clear that Vattimo's supposedly postmodern reading of Nietzsche does not correspond to the *Zarathushtra*, which rejects otherworldly values but eulogizes worldly ones, asking us to remain true to the earth and ignore those who speak of otherworldly hopes, and telling us now the greatest sin is to blaspheme against the earth and to rank love for the [fictitious otherworldly reality] higher than the meaning of the earth.

So there is no doubt we must enter a new stage of evolution, but what does this involve? Since the transition from hominid to human involved a leap in intellectual capacity depending on the increase of the human skull's size, naïve biological evolutionism would likely assume that the transition to the next stage of our evolution would involve a similar biological mutation. However, this is not the case, to begin with because the size and hence the capacity of the human skull cannot increase any further, as in our species the first cervical vertebra has welded with the opening at the base of the skull that, during a great deal of our phylogenetic development, made it possible for the skull to grow. Though in itself this does not mean human intelligence could not continue to increase, for it is well known that until today most of us have used only a small proportion of our brain, statistics show the IQ of US citizens has progressively diminished since the first nuclear test at Alamo Gordo, and though IQ is a culturally conditioned measurement that may not be equated with intelligence, it is clear that many variables in today's world could further degenerative biological tendencies.

And, in fact, as asserted by the nineteenth and twentieth century Indian politician, philosopher and mystic Shri Aurobindo, what would characterize what he called the superhuman—but which as noted above I prefer to call the posthuman—would not be a sharper intelligence; the posthuman would be the result of the widespread recovery of the capacity of Communion, and therefore of the self-liberation of delusorily valued thought. Shri Aurobindo's disciple, Satprem (1973), writes concerning his teacher's views with regard to the transition our species is supposed to undergo at the end of the cosmic cycle or aeon:

"'Superhumanhood', says Sri Aurobindo, 'is not man after climbing to his own natural zenith, not a superior degree of human greatness, knowledge, power, intelligence, will... genius... saintliness, love, purity or perfection'. It is SOMETHING ELSE, another vibration of being, another consciousness."

Within Christianity, Jesuit paleontologist-geologist-philosopher Pierre Teilhard de Chardin claimed that the human "has not been completed, but needs to be surpassed, completed;" having arrived at point *alpha*, now we must arrive at point *omega*, represented by the "Christogenesis," corresponding to the rise of the superhuman (for a comparison between the thought of Aurobindo and that of Teilhard, cf. Mourgue [1993]). From this we may infer that Jesus called himself the "Son of Man" because his "Christic" state should characterize the descendants-successors of human beings. However, as conceived by Teilhard, this transition could neither be undertaken individually or be limited to an elite—though in his view it would be promoted by an elite (Teilhard de Chardin [1974], p. 296; what here is in parentheses is a note in Teilhard's book; the translation into English of the excerpt is my own):

"The way out of the world, the doors of the future, the entrance to the superhuman, do not open forth either to some privileged beings or to a single people chosen among all peoples! They will only yield to the thrust of all together, in a direction in which, also together (though only thanks to the influence and leadership of a few: an elite) we may unite and become a whole within a spiritual renewal of the Earth."

Also Michel Foucault insisted that "man" must be overcome; however, when Foucault says "man," he is referring to a "historical device" produced by a particular knowledge/power over one and a half century ago, rather than referring to the "human condition" in general—as is the case with Nietzsche, Teilhard and Aurobindo. At any rate, there seems to be no alternative to the surpassing of the human condition (in the Sartrean sense of the term, in the humanist sense denounced by Heidegger in which *homo humanus*=*homo romanus*, and in Foucault's sense, but certainly not in the biological sense), for as we have seen repeatedly, this condition has now completed its *reductio ad absurdum*, and if it is not surpassed altogether, our species will cause its own destruction. As Fritjof Capra expressed it (Capra [1982]), we have come to a crossroads, and ahead to paths open: the one leading to the Bomb and the one leading to the Buddha. In Teilhard's terminology, the paths that open ahead of us are the one leading to nothingness and the one leading to the Christ (by this I am not endorsing Teilhard's philosophy, which I have criticized elsewhere).

For Buddhism, in order to achieve Awakening or liberation we must "find ourselves in the human condition," which does not mean simply that our bodies must have a human shape, but that we must possess the particular conditions of the psychological state Buddhism calls "human." This seems to be the meaning of the assertion of Tenzin Gyamtso's, the fourteenth Dalai Lama, that we must "become fully human" (Dalai Lama, Fourteenth, Tenzin Gyamtso, 1990); however, it would also be admissible to assert that so far we have been in the process of transition to the human condition, and that becoming fully human is the same that so far I have been referring to as "achieving the transition to the posthuman"—and understand the Fourteenth Dalai Lama's statement in this sense.

[147] Despite their being too general and not referring to particular authors, as though there were a single postmodern thought, I find there are some interesting points in the (later expunged) note Mayda Hočevar had originally appended to a paper she read in a Conference on Postmodernity:

"And here I find it necessary to refer to some "postmodern" theses the sensuality and beauty of which initially enthrall me, but which, as I see the other edge of the sword, make me shake with fury:

"1. The pretension of "postmodernism" not to believe itself possessor of the truth. I wander, where are, how can we find, of how can we cause to be born, these human beings who do not believe themselves to be possessors of the truth?

"2. Relativism without a frame of reference: any relativism that does not refer to an absolute is doomed to self-destruction.

"3. The variety of postmodernism *qua* set of alternative criteria before modernity, which nonetheless rejects the adoption of political, social and individual positions before the global problems that we face.

"4. Doing away with meaning and with the legitimization of human actions, by individuals for whom it is not at all the same to eat or not to eat.

"5. The rejection of univocal axiological criteria without changing human beings so that they do not need such criteria.

"6. The claim of going beyond ideologies: are not the injunctions of going beyond values, of respecting local narratives instead of producing metanarratives, and so on, clearly ideological?

"7. The assertion that I am one among many, with my value-system, my language, my beliefs, and that I must show the same respect and tolerance to all, including minorities, in the context of a society based on the benefit of some at the expense of others, and which we are supposed not to change insofar as it must be respected too.

"8. See Habermas, p. 17 (Ana Julia). (?!)

[148] Though Nicholas of Cusa died some eleven years after the supposed beginning of the "modern age," he is generally regarded as a premodern philosopher.

[149] Nicholas of Cusa noted that "our intellect, which is not the truth, never grasps the truth with such precision that it could not be comprehended with infinitely greater precision" (*De Docta Ignorantia* I, 3), and compared the approximation to truth characteristic of the mind that is subject to the principle of noncontradiction to a polygon inscribed in a circle that increases its number of sides without ever becoming a circle. Therefore knowledge is at best conjecture (*coniectura*). However, speculative reason can have an intellectual intuition (mystical in nature) that allows us to surpass the principle of noncontradiction and thus know the *coincidentia oppositorum* characteristic of reality, but especially of the infinite God, which could be compared to a circle having a radium infinite in size: in such a circle the curve would manifest coincidently with the strait line—so that in Him all opposition is reconciled in perfect unity. Plotinus, the other Neo-Platonists, Augustine of Hippo, Boethius, Pseudo-Dionysius, Anselm of Canterbury, the members of the School of Chartres, John of Fidanza (Saint Bonaventure), Meister Eckhart and many others also accepted a similar mystical intuition.

Furthermore, Plato, source of Western metaphysics, was a decidedly mythic thinker who posited eternal nonmaterial *eidos* that were know by some souls before birth, and a method for remembering these *eidos* that, despite being based on dialectic, was mystic in that it was a form of knowledge different from the one that is acquired through the senses. The problem with Plato was that his mysticism was of Orphic origin and thus was based in a poisonous antisomatic dualism.

[150] Lyotard (1994, pp. 31-32) writes:

"By metanarrative or grand narrative I understand precisely the narratives that have a legitimating or legitimating function. Its decadence does not forestall the existence of thousands of stories, small or not so small, that keep weaving the fabric of everyday life. "

Lyotard spares from his criticisms the privilege literary genre of small relates, which in his view escapes the legitimation crisis.

"Surely these narratives escape the crisis, but this is due to the fact that they have neither had a legitimation value."

This, however, does not mean that all popular proverbs maintain their legitimacy: in his view, postmodernity is also the end of the people as the king of stories.

[151] This does not mean, however, that such systems may refer to tables as tigers: as we have seen, in the post-Contemplation state, bodhisattvas are aware that it is just as valid to say the table is a table as to say it is not a table; however, unless it be as skillful means in a particular situation, they would never claim the table to be a tiger.

[152] This is what I have attempted to do in all that I have written in my lifetime, even though I would not pretend to have produced anything definitive in this regard.

[153] Walter A. Kauffman (1950, pp. 270 et seq.) showed Nietzsche did not coin the term *Übermensch*, for *hyperanthropos* is found in Luciano's writings in the second century CE (in *Kataplous*, 16), which Nietzsche studied and to which he made frequent references in his philologica. Furthermore, in German the term had already been used by Heinrich Müller, Herder, Jean Paul and Goethe.